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SKETCH
OF
REV. PHILIP GATCH.

PREPARED

BY HON. JOHN MCLEAN, LL. D.,
JUDGE OF THE SUPREME COURT OF THE UNITED STATES.

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TO THE READER.

IN the following pages a short account is given of the Rev. Philip Gatch, who was one of the earliest preachers that advocated the cause of Methodism in this country. He and William Watters attended the first conference that was held in America, in 1774. At the time they joined the conference they had been preaching about two years.

To those who feel an interest in the rise of Methodism in the country, the sketch can not fail to be interesting and instructive. Mr. Gatch showed traits of character eminently calculated to meet the exigencies of the time, and to inculcate and carry out the doctrines he preached. He had great firmness and perseverance, and was ready to suffer and die for the truth. While he acted

with great prudence, he shrunk from no responsibility which was necessary to be met in his course of duty.

The journal of Mr. Gatch is substantially copied from his own manuscripts, with a few alterations in the phraseology, and the corrections of some errors. Other parts, marked as quotations, were copied from manuscripts which were revised and corrected.

SKETCH
OF
REV. PHILIP GATCH.

THE outline of the following narrative is taken from the notes of the Rev. George Gatch, son of Philip Gatch. He says that his great-grandfather emigrated from Prussia to America when his grandfather was quite small. The precise time can not now be ascertained; but it must have been shortly before the date of the following permit, which was obtained from Hon. Leonard Colvert, the governor of the province of Maryland, and dated at the city of Annapolis, the twenty-sixth day of December, 1727. It stated, "Whereas, Godfrey Gash, and Maria, his wife, hath made it appear to me that they are free persons, and under no sort of contract to any person or persons; suffer them, therefore, to pass and repass through all parts of this province without any let, molestation, or interruption whatsoever, they behaving themselves according to law. Given under my hand," etc. "And it was directed to all

whom it may concern." The name was written Gash in the passport, as it was usually pronounced, though there is no trace in the family that the name was ever so spelled.

Mr. Philip Gatch says that his father served a fixed time to pay for his passage, and that, with other boys similarly situated, he was cruelly treated. Frequently he was beaten so as to be left senseless on the ground, for no other offense than that of conversing with his fellow-sufferers in their native language. By this restraint he gradually lost, in a great degree, his vernacular tongue.

In 1737 his great-grandfather purchased a farm in the neighborhood of Baltimore city, which, on his death, descended to the father of Philip Gatch. The farm is now in the hands of the fourth generation, and retains the family name. There is still standing upon it the first Methodist meeting-house built in that part of Maryland. It retains its old name of the Gatch church.

A sketch, written by the Rev. Philip Gatch, says that he was born the second of March, 1751. He says: My mother's maiden name was Burgin. Her ancestry settled, at an early date, near Georgetown, on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. They were originally from Burgundy, and claimed to have descended from a line of

ancestry in that principality. My parents belonged to the Episcopal Church; and though destitute of experimental religion, they paid some attention to its restraints and forms, which was a benefit to me. I learned to read when quite young; took delight in my books, especially those which gave a history of the times of pious persons. A sister elder than myself, used to watch over me with a tender regard. I recollect at one time, on using a bad word, the meaning of which I hardly knew, she reproved me in such a manner as to make a deep and lasting impression on my feelings. My conscience was quick and tender, and I felt the evil of sin, and endured great pain of soul on account of it. I seldom omitted my prayers, and strove to make my mind easy with the forms of religion; but this availed but little. Sinful acts in general I hated. I feared the Lord, and had a great desire to serve him; but knew not how. All was dark and dreary around me, and there was no one in the neighborhood who possessed religion. Priests and people in this respect were alike.

When in my seventeenth year my mind became less concerned for my future state than formerly. This was produced by vain and wicked associations; but God, in his mercy, soon arrested me in this dangerous situation. I was

prostrated upon a bed of affliction, and a beloved sister, about the same time, was called into eternity. Soon after this an uncle died suddenly. These visitations greatly alarmed me. The subject of death and judgment rested with great weight upon my mind. These impressions were strengthened by reading the Whole Duty of Man and Russel's Seven Sermons. I mourned in secret places, often wished I had never been born. I could see no way of escape; death and judgment, and, what was still worse, a never-ending eternity of pain and misery, were constantly before me. At this time the state of my mind became visible to others. My father became concerned about my situation; but such was his ignorance of spiritual things, that all he could do for me was to caution me against carrying the matter too far. Having no one to instruct me, a wicked and deceitful heart to contend with, vain and ungodly examples before me, I was constantly led astray.

By experience I learned that the pleasures of sin were delusive, of short duration, and that they always left a sting behind them. I found, too, that my fallen and corrupt nature was strengthened by the indulgence of evil propensities. To counteract these, I determined to try a course of self-denial. I resolved

to break down the carnal mind by crucifying the flesh, with its lusts and affections. I found this course to be of great service to me. All this time I had not heard a Gospel sermon. I had read some of the writings of the Society of Friends, and had a great desire to attend their meetings, but had not the opportunity. I felt that I had lost my standing in the Established Church by not performing the obligations of my induction into it, and this was a source of great distress to me. I desired rest to my soul, but had no one to take me by the hand and lead me to the fountain of life. From the errors of my ways it seemed I could not escape.

I was alarmed by dreams, by sickness, and by various other means, which were sent by God, in his mercy, for my good. Indeed, from a child, the Spirit of grace strove with me; but great was the labor of mind that I felt, and I did not know the way to be saved from my guilt and wretchedness. It pleased God, however, to send the Gospel into our neighborhood, in January, 1772, through the instrumentality of the Methodists. Previous to this time, Robert Strawbridge, a local preacher from Ireland, had settled between Baltimore and Fredericktown, and under his ministry three others were raised up—Richard Owen, Sater Stephenson, and Nathan Perigo. Nathan Perigo was the first

to introduce Methodist preaching in the neighborhood where I lived. He possessed great zeal, and was strong in the faith of the Gospel. I was near him when he opened the exercises of the first meeting I attended. His prayer alarmed me much; I never had witnessed such energy nor heard such expressions in prayer before.. I was afraid that God would send some judgment upon the congregation for my being at such a place. I attempted to make my escape, but was met by a person at the door who proposed to leave with me; but I knew he was wicked, and that it would not do to follow his counsel, so I returned.

The sermon was accompanied to my understanding by the Holy Spirit. I was stripped of all my self-righteousness. It was to me as filthy rags when the Lord made known to me my condition. I saw myself altogether sinful and helpless, while the dread of hell seized my guilty conscience. Three weeks from this time I attended preaching again at the same place. My distress became very great; my relatives were all against me, and it was hard to endure my father's opposition. He asked me what the matter was, but I made him no answer, as I thought others saw my case as I felt it. He said I was going beside myself, and should go to hear the Methodists no more;

that his house should not hold two religions. I thought this was no great objection, fearing there was little religion in the house; but I made no reply, still intending to attend preaching as I should have opportunity.

It afterward occurred to me that I had heard of the Methodists driving some persons mad, and began to fear it might be the case with me. I had often been distressed on account of sin, but I had never realized before the condition I was then in. This gave the enemy the advantage over me, and I began to resist conviction, determining, however, that I would live a religious life; but O how soon did I fail in my purpose! I was about five weeks in this deluded state. O the patience and long-suffering of God! He might in justice have cut me down as a cumberer of the ground. This I felt and feared. I was aroused from seeing a man who was very much intoxicated, in great danger of losing his life, and, as I supposed, of going to hell. The anguish of my soul now became greater than I can describe.

I again went to hear Mr. Perigo preach, and felt confounded under the word. The man at whose house the meeting was had found peace. After preaching he followed me into the yard, and while conversing with me his words reached my heart; it was tendered, and I wept. Be-

fore I got home my father heard what had taken place, and he, with several others, attacked me; but the Lord helped me, so that with the Scriptures I was enabled to withstand them.

My friends now sought in good earnest to draw me away from the Methodists, bringing many false accusations against them; but I concluded, be it as it may be with them, it was not well with me. My cry was day and night to God for mercy. I feared that there was no mercy for me. I had neglected so many calls from God, that I feared that he had now given me over to hardness of heart, and that my day of grace was forever gone. I continued under these awful apprehensions for some time.

On the 26th of April I attended a prayer meeting. After remaining some time, I gave up all hopes, and left the house. I felt that I was too bad to remain where the people were worshiping God. At length a friend came out to me, and requested me to return to the meeting; believing him to be a good man, I returned with him, and, under the deepest exercise of mind, bowed myself before the Lord, and said in my heart, If thou wilt give me power to call on thy name how thankful will I be! Immediately I felt the power of God to affect me body and soul. It went through my

whole system. I felt like crying aloud. God said, by his Spirit, to my soul, "My power is present to heal thy soul, if thou wilt but believe." I instantly submitted to the operation of the Spirit of God, and my poor soul was set at liberty. I felt as if I had got into a new world. I was certainly brought from hell's dark door, and made nigh unto God by the blood of Jesus.

"Tongue can not express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."

Ere I was aware I was shouting aloud, and should have shouted louder if I had had more strength. I was the first person known to shout in that part of the country. The order of God differs from the order of man. He knows how to do his own work, and will do it in his own way, though it often appears strange to us. Indeed, it is a strange work to convert a precious soul. I had no idea of the greatness of the change, till the Lord gave me to experience it. A grateful sense of the mercy and goodness of God to my poor soul overwhelmed me. I tasted and saw that the Lord was good.

Two others found peace the same evening, which made seven conversions in the neighborhood. I returned home happy in the love of God. I felt great concern for my parents, but

I knew not what would be the result of my change. My father had threatened to drive me from home, and I knew that he was acquainted with what had taken place the night before, for he heard me in my exercises near three-quarters of a mile, and knew my voice. But God has his way in the whirlwind, and all things obey him. Up to this time my father was permitted to oppose me, but now God said by his providence to the boisterous waves of persecution, Thou shalt go no farther. He said to me, while under conviction, "There is your eldest brother; he has better learning than you, and if there is any thing good in it, why does he not find it out?" That brother was present when I received the blessing, and became powerfully converted. My father inquired of him the next morning what had taken place at the meeting; he gave him the particulars, and wound up by saying, if they did not all experience the same change, they would go to hell. This was a nail in a sure place. My father had dreamed a short time before that a sprout grew up through his house, and that its progress was so rapid he became alarmed for the safety of his house; he wanted to remove it, but was afraid to cut it down lest the house should be destroyed by the fall. He found an interpretation to his dream in what was taking place in the family.

Mr. Perigo had made an appointment for Monday evening, half way between his own house and my father's, for the accommodation of two neighborhoods. At this time we had no circuit preaching, and he began to be pressed by the many calls made on him by those who were perishing for the bread of life.

My brother and I attended the meeting, and it was a blessed time; several were converted. At the request of my brother, Mr. Perigo made an appointment to preach at my father's on the ensuing Thursday evening. My brother proposed to me to have prayers with the family on Tuesday evening. I felt diffident in taking up the cross, but told him if he could induce two of the neighbors to come in and join us, I would try. The neighbors came at the time appointed; the family were called together as orderly as if they had always been accustomed to family worship. I read two chapters, and then exhorted them to look to God in prayer, assuring them that he would not suffer them to be deceived. The Lord blessed me with a spirit of prayer, and he made manifest his power among us. I rose from my knees and spoke to them some time, and it had a gracious effect upon the family. Thenceforward we attended to family prayer.

Mr. Perigo, according to his appointment,

preached, and spent some time in conversation with my parents. He formed two classes in the neighborhood, and established a prayer meeting, at which both classes came together. By this time many had experienced religion. My parents, and most of their children, a brother-in-law, and two of his sisters, in about five weeks, had joined the Church. The work was great, for it was the work of God. In our prayer and class meetings I sometimes gave a word of exhortation, and was blessed in so doing. After some time, my mind became exercised on the subject of extending my sphere of action, and becoming more public in my exercises. When I first began to speak a little in our neighborhood meetings, I entertained no such thoughts; but now my impressions became so strong that my mind was thrown into great conflict. I felt such great weakness that to proceed appeared to be impossible; to draw back was a gloomy thought. My comforts failed, and I sank into a state of despondency. I endeavored to stifle those impressions, but they would return with increased force, and again a sense of my weakness would sink my feelings lower than ever. I knew not what to do. I read the first chapter of Jeremiah, portions of which seemed to suit my condition. I then concluded if the Lord would sanctify me,

I should be better prepared to speak his word. I prayed that the impression to speak the word of the Lord might be removed from my mind, and that he would give me to feel the need of being sanctified. My prayer was heard, and he granted my request. I labored under a sense of want, but not of guilt. I needed strength of soul. God knew that it was necessary for me to tarry in Jerusalem till endued with power from on high. The struggle was severe but short. I spent the most of my time in prayer, but sometimes only with groans that I could not utter. I had neither read nor heard much on the subject, till in the midst of my distress a person put into my hands Mr. Wesley's sermon on Salvation by Faith. The person knew nothing of my exercise of mind.

I thought if salvation was to be obtained by faith, why not now? I prayed, but the comforter tarried. I prayed again, and still the answer was delayed. God had his way in the work; my faith was strengthened and my hope revived. I told my brother that I believed God would bless me that night in family prayer. He knew that my mind was in a great struggle, but did not know the pursuit of my heart. In the evening, while my brother-in-law prayed with the family, a great trembling seized me. After it had subsided, I was called upon to

pray. I commenced, and after a few minutes I began to cry to God for my own soul, as if there was not another to be saved or lost. The Spirit of the Lord came down upon me, and the opening heavens shone around me. By faith I saw Jesus at the right hand of the Father. I felt such a weight of glory that I fell with my face to the floor, and the Lord said by his Spirit, "You are now sanctified, seek to grow in the fruit of the Spirit." Gal. v, 22, 23. This work and the instruction of Divine truth were sealed on my soul by the Holy Ghost. My joy was full. I related to others what God had done for me. This was in July, a little more than two months after I had received the Spirit of justification.

The following remarks are copied from a friend:

"Let us here pause for a moment, and contemplate that special interposition of the Spirit and providence of God, so clearly manifested in the exercises and experience of Mr. Gatch. His conviction seemed to have originated and progressed, in a great measure, without any secondary agency, such as is often furnished in the instructions and examples of others. His exercise, when converted, being constrained to praise God aloud—a circumstance unknown either to himself or others who had previously

become members of the society in that vicinity, and which must have been the legitimate effect of that power by which his heart was renewed; his being led to seek for sanctification without knowing it as a fundamental doctrine of the Church, Mr. Wesley's sermon on Salvation by Faith being so seasonably put into his hands by a person entirely ignorant of the peculiar state of his mind; and the clearness of the evidence borne by the Spirit of God on his receiving the blessing of sanctification, demonstrate clearly that he was taken fully into the school of Christ, and was being trained for the duties and sufferings that awaited him as a pioneer-laborer in the extensive fields that were already whitening to the harvest, in the colonies of North America."

The autobiography then continues: Immediately after receiving the blessings of perfect love, my impressions to speak in public returned; but notwithstanding my former vows to God, and the faithful performance, on his part, of what I had requested as a condition of my obedience, still my rebellious heart rose in opposition to the counsels of God. I again became the subject of deep and pungent distress on the subject. In addition to this, God brought me down upon a bed of affliction. I became so low that my friends gave me up to

die. In my extremity, like Jonah, I promised the Lord that if he would spare me I would speak his word, though it should be in ever so broken a manner. While in this low condition I dreamed that I used a certain remedy and recovered. I awoke, told my dream, the remedy was provided, and I at once began to recover.

Thus was I led about in the wilderness, and chastised and instructed of the Lord. It is his work to call and qualify for the ministry. In the course of the fall Mr. Asbury formed and traveled a circuit that included our neighborhood. He put into my hands Mr. Wesley's Thoughts on Christian Perfection. This work was made a blessing to me. I found in Mr. Asbury a friend in whom I could ever after repose the most implicit confidence. On entering upon what I was now fully convinced was my duty, I concluded to go out of the neighborhood of my acquaintance, as it would be less embarrassing to me. I had heard of a settlement in Pennsylvania, and concluded to make my way to it. I made known my purpose to Mr. Perigo. His only reply was, "If you meet with encouragement you may make an appointment for me." I received this as a sort of license, and immediately set out, accompanied by two friends. We reached the place, and

applied to John Lawson, who was reported to be the best man in the settlement, and most likely to give the privilege of holding meetings at his house. This, however, he refused on doctrinal grounds, he being a Calvinist. This was a sore trial to me. He, however, extended to us the hospitalities of his house.

We had a great deal of conversation with him on the subject of religion, but mostly of a controversial character. While at his house one of my companions fell in with a man who lived near by, and stated to him my case. He said I should be welcome to hold meetings at his house. An appointment for me was circulated for the next day, it being the Sabbath. This was some relief to my mind. In the morning there was a severe snow-storm, which was gratifying to me, as I supposed there would be but a small number at the meeting. The people, however, began to assemble rapidly, and I concluded they were the largest persons I had ever seen. I arose, gave out a hymn, and the friends who accompanied me sang it. I then prayed and proceeded to give an exhortation. The Lord gave me great strength of soul. I arose above my weakness, and felt my way was of God.

I made an appointment for Mr. Perigo, visited two other places, and returned home.

This was in the latter part of 1772. I now gave out an appointment in my father's neighborhood, and felt that I was called to exercise the gift of exhortation. I had many calls to attend meetings in the surrounding country; for in those days the word of the Lord was precious. The day before Mr. Perigo should start to fill his appointment in Pennsylvania, he came to my father's to let me know he had to attend court, and could not go. He did not ask me to go, but I concluded that I would try it again. I set out with another lad, and the first night we lodged with a man who knew our parents. The family was kind to us, and many inquiries were made of us. The man was orderly, and, like Lydia, received the word of the Lord with his household.

After we had prayed with the family we were taken to an out-house to sleep, which was any thing but comfortable. Flesh and blood complained, but the Lord said to me that "the Son of man had not where to lay his head." Most unexpectedly this was made to me one of the sweetest night's lodgings I ever enjoyed. Thus can God overrule for good prospects the most discouraging. The next day, on our way to the appointment, we overtook John Lawson and a large company with him. The congregation was large, and gave good attention to

the things that were spoken. I had a small circuit in this part of the country till the next fall. The people had different professions among them; but little religion. They were as sheep having no shepherd. They submitted to the Gospel yoke, and the Lord raised up two preachers from among them. In the latter part of July, 1773, I had three appointments to attend. At the first I had not the liberty I had formerly enjoyed. I knew something was the matter, but could not tell what it was. Next morning I returned, and spent all the time I could in secret. I proceeded to my appointment, but the difficulty was the same in the afternoon. I concluded to direct my remarks particularly to the mourners, as it seemed to be most congenial with my own exercises. The Spirit of the Lord was made manifest to the speaker and hearers. As I returned home I was led to inquire into the condition of my own soul, and I found all was dark. The feelings of the spirit of love had left me. I knew that all was not right with me, and I thought if God would show me what it was it would give me some relief. Texts of Scripture would often present themselves to my mind, but I rejected the idea of preaching. I considered that the gift of exhortation was as much as I could improve; but while engaged

in family prayer I was fully impressed that it was my duty to preach. I then besought the Lord for the gift of preaching. A passage of Scripture was presented to my mind, together with an arrangement of the subject, all of which took place while we were yet upon our knees. The next Sabbath I had an appointment at Evans's meeting-house, the oldest society in Baltimore county. My soul was full of light and life while preaching. When I came out of the pulpit a friend met me, and said I must stay and preach for them in the afternoon, adding that it was no trouble for me to preach. It struck me that I had not another text from which I could preach. I consented, however, to stay and exhort. My weakness was very great. I had to live by faith; but in mercy God and the people bore with me. I continued to preach and exhort at those places where I began my labors, and was greatly blessed, and had cause to rejoice in the prosperity of Zion. I had engaged to take a tour through Virginia in the fall with Mr. Strawbridge; but, previous to the time we had set for our departure, the quarterly meeting came on for the Baltimore circuit, at which the official members were to be examined. Mr. Rankin, the general superintendent, was present. After my character had passed, he asked me if I could travel in the

regular work. This was altogether unexpected to me, but I did not dare to refuse. He then asked me if I had a horse; I answered that I had. Mr. Asbury then asked me if my parents would be willing to give me up. I replied that I thought they would be. They had always concurred in my going out where duty called. I found that I had no way of retreat, but had to make a full surrender of myself to God and the work. Mr. Rankin then replied, "You must go to the Jerseys." This was unexpected to me. If I had been sent to Virginia, I should have been gratified. At first I was much cast down, but before the meeting closed my mind was relieved.

I had but little time to prepare for my work, for I was to meet Mr. Rankin by a certain time, and accompany him as far as Philadelphia on my way. I found it a severe trial to part with my parents and friends. My feelings for a time got the ascendancy; it was like breaking asunder the tender cords of life, a kind of death to me, but I dared not to look back. He that will be Christ's disciple must forsake all and follow him. I met Mr. Rankin according to appointment. Mr. Asbury lay sick at the place of meeting. He called for me to his room, and gave me such advice as he thought suitable to my case. He was well calculated to adminis-

ter to my condition, for he had left father and mother behind when he came to America. The first evening after we left this place Mr. Rankin preached at Newcastle, and the day following we hurried on to reach Philadelphia. To raise my spirits, as I suppose, he remarked, as we rode on, that there would be meeting that night, and that we should meet with Messrs. Pilmoor and King. I asked him who was to preach; he said that generally fell on the greatest stranger, and he supposed it would be me; but said on Saturday evening they do not confine themselves to any particular subject. On our arrival Mr. Pilmoor called in, and he, with Mr. Rankin, went out, telling me to be ready on their return. But they staid so long that I concluded they had forgotten me, and, like Agag, the bitterness of death had passed. But at length they returned and hurried me off, telling me I must not think of them; but they did not seem to appreciate my feelings. I, however, endeavored to discharge my duty, and felt comforted.

Next morning, in company with Mr. King, I crossed the Delaware. He preached, and held a love-feast. On the following morning he pursued his journey, leaving me a "stranger in a strange land."

"The situation which Mr. Gatch now occupied

was one of deep interest. The field of his labors stretches out before him of great extent, having had but little moral or religious culture. He does not enter into other men's labors, and he is diffident of his own qualifications for the work. His education had been very limited, as was also his religious experience as a preacher. He had to encounter ignorance, prejudice, and persecution—a formidable array to the most talented and experienced preacher. He represented a sect, too, that was everywhere spoken against. To the prevailing sectarians his doctrines were misunderstood and misrepresented, till they had become odious to professors of religion generally. He was but a stripling of less than twenty-one years of age, low of stature, and of a very youthful appearance. The odds were fearfully against him. Of success there would seem to be no human probability. But 'his weapons were not carnal, but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of the strong-holds of Satan.' His faith was strong in proportion to the weakness he so often felt and deplored.

"He was the first preacher sent as a regular itinerant into New Jersey. The Minutes of the conference for 1773 sets down J. King and William Watters to that appointment. But this is supposed to be an error in the record. It is

certain that neither of these gentlemen traveled in that state at the time specified. Mr. Watters, in a short account of his ministerial labors, written by himself, says, that in October, 1772, he accompanied Mr. Williams, a local preacher, to Virginia; that he remained there eleven months, and in the following November took an appointment on Kent circuit, Delaware; that he never saw Messrs. Asbury and Rankin till his return from Virginia. It must have been about the same time he went to Kent circuit, or before, that Mr. King accompanied Mr. Gatch to his appointment in New Jersey, but did not remain on the circuit. Mr. Gatch speaks of attending to appointments of his own in July, 1772, and of his having engaged to accompany Mr. Strawbridge into Virginia in the fall, which arrangement was defeated by the appointment of Mr. Gatch to New Jersey. Though William Watters stands first on the list of native Americans that entered the itinerant field, they were very nearly assimilated in their history. They were born the same year. Watters experienced religion first, but they began to exercise in public in the same summer of 1772. While Watters was laboring in Virginia, Gatch was laboring in Pennsylvania, and other parts where the openings of Providence directed.

"Mr. Watters's name being on the Minutes for 1773, brought him into the number admitted, and made an assistant May 25, 1774. Gatch was placed in the same relation at the same conference, which shows that the conference considered the act of the quarterly meeting, at which Mr. Gatch was employed, which Mr. Rankin and Mr. Asbury attended, as regular. Mr. Watters and Mr. Gatch sat each for the first time in the same conference in the same relation. This detail is rendered proper, as these venerable ministers were the first recruits for the itineracy in America."

The narrative of Mr. Gatch is resumed. He says: Three considerations rested on my mind with great weight: first, my own weakness; secondly, the help that God alone could afford; and, thirdly, the salvation of the souls of the people to whom I have been sent. The Lord was with me, and my labors on the circuit were crowned with some success. Not many joined at that time to be called by our name, for it was very much spoken against. Fifty-two united with the Church, most of whom professed religion. Benjamin Abbott's wife and three of her children were among the number. David, one of the children, became a useful preacher. Though I found the cross to be very heavy while serving the circuit in my imper-

fect manner, when I was called to part with the friends for whom I had been laboring, I found it to be a great trial, for we possessed the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

From the circuit I went to Philadelphia, where conference commenced on the 25th of May, 1774. At that conference five preachers were taken into full connection—William Watters, Abraham Whitworth, Joseph Gerburg, Philip Ebert, and Philip Gatch. Joseph Gerburg, Philip Ebert, and Philip Gatch, and eight others, were received on trial. These were trying times to Methodist preachers. Some endured as seeing Him who is invisible, by faith; others left the field in the day of conflict. My appointment by the conference was to Frederick circuit, with William Duke, who was quite a youth, for six months. We found the circuit to be very laborious; some of the rides were quite long; and only one hundred and seventy-five members in the society. Fredericktown and Georgetown were both in the circuit, but there were only a few members in each. Mr. Strawbridge and Mr. Owens lived in the bounds of this charge. We found among the few in society some steady, firm members, and in some places the prospects were encouraging. I had gone but a few rounds on the circuit when I received a letter from Mr. Shadford, directing me

to gather up my clothes and books, and meet him at the quarterly meeting to be held in Baltimore. It immediately occurred to me that Whitworth had proved treacherous, and that the object was to send me to Kent circuit. I accordingly met Mr. Shadford at the quarterly meeting. It was a time of the outpouring of the Spirit; my own soul was greatly refreshed. Mr. Shadford, at the interview, made a remark which was afterward of service to me. Said he, "When addressing the people, always treat on those subjects that will affect your own heart, and the feelings of the hearers will be sure to be affected." I now learned that Whitworth had committed a grievous sin; that his wickedness had been discovered immediately on his reaching his circuit; and that he had fled, leaving his family behind, in consequence of which the circuit had been without preaching since conference. So I was ordered to Kent circuit to take the place of Whitworth.

This, under the circumstances, was a great trial to me, for he had given the enemies of Methodism great ground for reproach. But in the name of the Lord I proceeded. My first Sabbath appointment was at the very place where he had wounded the cause of God. I felt both weak and strong. There was assembled a very large congregation. Many behaved

quite disorderly, evincing an intention of treating the service with contempt. I had not the fortitude to reprove them, knowing the cause of their conduct. After I had closed my sermon, I made an appointment to preach at the same place in two weeks, and remarked that I was sorry they had been so long without preaching, and that I hoped they would not censure the conference, for they had been imposed upon by a man unworthy, as he had proved himself to be, of their confidence; that they disapproved of the man, and of all such conduct of which he had been guilty. But the Lord reigneth, and he often saith, "Be still and know that I am God." In this instance he manifested his power in an extraordinary manner, in overruling the evil which we feared. The work of the Lord was greatly revived on this small circuit. Numbers were converted at the different appointments; and in the neighborhood where the wound was inflicted, the work of God was the most powerful. The Most High can work as he pleases. His way is often in the whirlwind. By request I had made an appointment out of the bounds of my circuit; and while I was preaching a man entered the door whose countenance excited my suspicion. He gradually approached toward me, and while I was making the closing prayer, he seized the chair posts at

which I was kneeling, evidently intending to use it as a weapon with which to attack me; but I took hold of the short post, and prevented him from striking me. The contest now became violent, and he roared like a lion, while I was upon my knees reproving him in the language of St. Paul. But he was soon seized by persons in the congregation, and thrown with such energy out of the house that his coat was torn in the back from top to bottom. While in the yard he raved like a demon, but I escaped without injury.

At this place Philip Cox, who afterward became a useful preacher in the traveling connection, was caught in the Gospel net. Two young men who lived contiguous to my circuit, who had been on a tour to Virginia, attended Baptist meeting; one of them had experienced religion, and the other was under conviction. They induced me to make an appointment in their neighborhood. The parish minister hearing of it, circulated through the parish his intention to meet and refute me. I heard of this the day before the appointment was to take place; and I understood that he was a mighty man of war. I knew that I was weak, and that unless I was strengthened from on high I should fail. I went to God in prayer, and he brought to my mind the case of David with

the lion, the bear, and with Goliah. I then gathered strength, and no longer dreaded the encounter.

The minister met me in the yard, in Episcopalian costume, and asked me if I was the person that was to preach there that day. I replied, "I expect to do so." He then asked me by what authority. I answered, "By the authority which God gave me." After a few words had passed between us, he again asked by what authority I had come to preach in St. Luke's parish. I remarked that I was just then going to preach, and he might judge for himself, for the Scripture saith, "He that is spiritual judgeth all things." I stood upon a platform erected for the occasion, in an orchard. Parson Kain took his station quartering on my right. I took for my text Ezekiel xviii, 27: "Again, when the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive." I concluded that this sentence, which is contained in the Church prayer-book, would not be taking him from home. I knew a great deal of the prayer-book by heart, and took it with me through my sermon. Mr. Kain's countenance evinced an excited state of mind. When I had closed he took the stand, and on my handing him my Bible, he attempted to read

the interview with Nicodemus, but he was so confused that he could not distinctly read it. From that passage he attempted to disprove the new birth, substituting in its stead water baptism. He exclaimed against extemporaneous prayer, urging the necessity of a written form.

When he had closed I again took the stand, read the same passage, and remarked that we could feel the effects of the wind upon our bodies, and see it on the trees, but the wind we could not see; and I referred to my own experience, as having been baptized in infancy, but was not sensible of the regeneration influences of the Spirit till the time of my conversion; that then it was sensibly felt. I met his objection to extemporary prayer by a few Scripture cases, such as when Peter was wrecking he did not go ashore to get a prayer-book, but cried out, "Save, Lord, or I perish." I then quit the stand to meet an appointment that afternoon, and the congregation followed, with the parson in the rear. When leaving, a man came to me and asked me to preach at his house, which was twenty miles from the orchard. These things are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes.

One Sabbath, while I was preaching, there came up an awful storm. Some of the people

ran out for fear the house would be blown over. I exhorted them to continue in the house, and look to God for safety. I hardly ever saw such a house of prayer. Two were converted during the storm, and our lives were spared. Salvation is of the Lord, and the pure in heart shall see him in his wonderful ways. I was called upon to visit a man who was nigh unto death. I was at a loss to know how to meet his case; there appeared to be something mysterious in it. I left him as I found him; but his case bore with such weight upon my mind that I visited him again, and dealt plainly with him. I told him plainly that I thought him unprepared for his change. The Lord sent it home to his heart. When I came round again I found him happy in the love of God, and two weeks after I preached his funeral.

The societies on the circuit were much united, and there was a great door opened for the spread of the Gospel. When I left it two preachers were sent on it. I attended Baltimore quarterly meeting, and from that I was sent into Frederick circuit again. Here we had to labor hard as formerly. Some societies were lively and on the increase, but others were barren. One Saturday evening as I was going to my Sabbath appointment, I had to pass by a tavern. As I approached I heard a noise,

and concluded mischief was contemplated. It was dark, and I bore as far from the house as I could in the lane that inclosed the road; but they either heard or saw me, and I was pursued by two men on horseback, who seized my horse by the bridle, and turning me about, led me back to the house, heaping upon me severe threats, and laying on my shoulders a heavy cudgel that was carried by one of them. After they got me back to the tavern, they ordered me to call for something to drink; but on my refusal the tavern-keeper whispered to me that if I would it should cost me nothing; but I refused to do so regardless of the consequences.

While the subject as to what disposition was to be made of me was under consultation, two of them disagreed, and by this quarrel the attention of the company was drawn from me, so that I rode on my way, leaving them to settle the matter as best they could. The Lord hath made all things for himself, the wicked for the day of evil; the wicked brought me into difficulty, and by the wicked a way was made for my escape.

Mr. Shadford attended our quarterly meeting full of the spirit of preaching. We had a large congregation, and no doubt good was done. This was a large circuit, and there was a great diversity in the manners and views of

the people scattered over such an extensive country. This made it difficult for a preacher to suit himself to all cases; but we had this consolation, that, though in some places indifference and persecution prevailed, yet in others the cause was prosperous, and many joined the Church. I left the circuit a short time before conference by direction, and spent some time in New Jersey. Whitworth, when he left Frederick, had gone into the Jerseys, and had poisoned Ebert with the doctrines of Universalism, and he had been dismissed. By reason of this the circuit had been destitute of preaching for a considerable time. When I had fulfilled my mission there, I proceeded to the conference, which was held in Philadelphia, the 19th of May, 1775.

“Mr. Gatch had now closed his first itinerant year by the appointment of the conference, making, with the time that he had previously traveled in New Jersey, some eighteen or twenty months which he had been regularly engaged in the work. It was an early usage to change after six months, but we find him removed several times from one circuit to another, partly owing to the few laborers in proportion to the field to be cultivated, and partly to meet and counteract difficulties that threatened the Church with serious injury. This was

a situation that would have been a severe trial to men of more years and greater experience than himself. We scarcely know which to admire most, his readiness to conform to the will of his superiors, or his success in the accomplishment of the work assigned him. But in those times of labor and peril, a man who engaged in the work did it at the sacrifice of self-gratification and personal ease. They had counted the cost, and were ready to go whithersoever they were sent. They had the true missionary spirit, and were willing to encounter dangers and deaths to promote the cause of their Master, and finish their course in triumph. At that day no stations were sought for as agreeable situations. The work to be done was the first and the last consideration with the directing power, in disregard of all personal considerations. How favorably does this spirit contrast with modern Methodism!

"The Church in its infancy had peculiar trials to endure. The reproach of Christ had to be borne; persecution had to be encountered at every step; few as were the members of the Church there were traitors in it. And yet these things were overcome by the faithfulness of a few who were in the field. Since the days of the apostles there had scarcely been a time when so much prudence, firmness, enduring

labor, and holiness were required as in the propagation of Methodism in America. To his deep piety and entire devotion, the success of Mr. Gatch may be attributed. His prudence was wonderful on being sent to Kent circuit. How soon did he retrieve the Church and eradicate the disgrace which had been thrown upon it by his predecessor on that circuit! This beginning of his labors was an earnest of what effects might be anticipated from his future life. The increase on Kent circuit, according to the Minutes, was one hundred; that of Frederick circuit, one hundred and sixty-one."

Mr. Gatch continues: I was appointed by the Philadelphia conference to Kent circuit, with John Cooper for my colleague, a young man that I had recommended to the conference. The first time I saw him was at a meeting on Frederick circuit. I had heard of him before. He was a young man of a solemn and fixed countenance, and had suffered much persecution. At one time, when on his knees at prayer, in an apartment of his father's house, he was discovered by his father, who threw a shovel of hot embers upon him, and afterward expelled him from his house. His public services were solemn and his life was exemplary. He lived and died in the traveling connection.

I took the circuit at Luke parish. After the first service was over a man came to me and told me some gentlemen out of doors wished to speak with me. Here I had to appear before parson Kain and others. The parson had a great many questions to ask me, and I answered them; but he could get no advantage of me. A man standing at my left undertook me, whom I had known when on the circuit before. He expressed a wish to be considered friendly. I felt disposed to hit him, and I replied that I could not talk to two at once; and turning to a man on my right hand, I observed, "Here seems to be a reasonable man, I will answer him any question he may be pleased to ask." I knew not the man; I knew not the individual, but the remark made a friend of the mammon of unrighteousness. He became very friendly; but I was informed that some time before he attended a meeting, and after service invited the preacher up stairs, and shortly after they came tumbling down stairs. Pretending to wish some conversation with the preacher, he laid hold on him violently. The Lord can make the wicked a ransom for the righteous. Parson Kain's flock soon became scattered, and his place was lost, so that he troubled us no more.

Before I got around my circuit I was taken

with the small-pox, which disease I had probably taken while in Philadelphia; but having no knowledge that I was exposed to it, my system was unprepared for it. I suffered indescribably, and for a time my life was despaired of. The family with whom I lay sick was large, and it brought great distress upon them. Two of them died—the father and a young lady who lived with the family. This caused me great distress of mind, though at times I had such manifestations of the love of God, that I was sustained. While unable to travel, Mr. Rankin sent a young man on the circuit, lately arrived from Ireland. Like Jonah he had fled from the Lord; but he brought a letter of introduction from Mr. Boardman to Mr. Rankin, which requested him to put the young man immediately on a circuit. After I recovered two of us were employed on the circuit, and one visited those places not yet taken into the regular work. By this means we enlarged our borders. Our quarterly meeting was held in St. Luke's parish. Mr. Rankin was with me. Great threats had been made against this meeting, but it passed off without interruption. About this time the young man who had been converted and joined the Baptists in the south, and who was instrumental in introducing the Gospel into St. Luke's parish, fell sick unto

death. I visited him, conversed with him on subjects suited to his condition, prayed with him, kissed him, and parted with him till the resurrection of the just. While on this ~~circuit~~ I had the opportunity of hearing Captain Webb preach. He spoke much on the important point of introducing Methodism into the colonies in a most solemn, and impressive, and practical manner.

I left Kent circuit in the fall, and was in Baltimore town and circuit for some time. When I went round the circuit I found John Lawson's house a preaching-place. He then related the exercise of mind through which he passed when I first introduced preaching into his neighborhood. Glory to God! the man who was once a great trial to me, when refusing me the privilege of holding meeting in his house, is now a comfort to me; but the Lord took care of me, and provided me a house in which to speak his word. It encourages me still to think of the great goodness of God to me when I was but a child. The preacher in Frederick circuit was under a business necessity of coming into Baltimore; so we exchanged, and I went to Frederick the third time. I was glad to see my old friends, but persecution raged in some places on the circuit. I was called on to preach about ten miles below the

circuit, where two Baptist preachers had a short time before been taken from the stand. The friends supposed that I would be treated in like manner; but I went trusting in the Lord. When I arrived there three of the great ones of the earth were in waiting to receive me; one of them examined my doctrines, and when he found they were not Calvinistic he said no more. They all remained and heard me through. At a third appointment in the same place—it being at the house of a widow lady—a large man met me at the door, and refused to let me go in. He claimed some connection with the family, from which he imagined his right to act as he did. A small man present said his house was close by, and if I would preach there I should be welcome. The other asked him if he knew what he was doing. He said yes, and let any person interrupt if he dared.

In the world there is tribulation, but in Jesus there is peace. Generally where the work of God prospered most persecution raged with the most violence. There was a large society between Bladensburg and Baltimore, at which I had preached in the forenoon, and was on my way to an appointment in the evening. I had heard that a man whose wife had been convicted under the preaching of Mr. Webster,

intended to revenge himself on me that afternoon. We saw them at a distance, for there was a large company with me of men, women, and children. I was not in the least intimidated. Two of the company met us, and demanded my pass. I told them that I was not so far from home as to need a pass. They caught my horse by the bridle, and said I should go before a magistrate. I told them the only objection I had to that was, it would be taking me out of my way. By this time a third one came up, and asked me if I was the great orator they had there. My feelings were composed, and I inquired of him why he would like to know. He said he had heard me. I then asked him how he liked my discourse. He replied that a part of it he liked well enough. He was a man of good disposition, and went to the place with no intention of joining my assailants. I afterward understood they charged him with being cowardly; but rather than lie under the imputation, he sacrificed his conscience. Come out from the wicked. Evil communications corrupt good manners, both toward God and man.

Those that were in waiting hailed the men that had me in custody; so I was conducted to the mob, and all further ceremony ceased. The tar was applied, commencing at my left cheek.

The uproar now became very great, some swearing and some crying. My company was anxious to fight my way through. The women were especially resolute; they dealt out their denunciations against the mob in unmeasured terms. With much persuasion I prevented my friends from using violent means. I told them I could bear it for Christ's sake. I felt an uninterrupted peace. My soul was joyful in the God of my salvation.

The man who officiated called out for more tar, adding that I was true blue. He laid it on liberally. At length one of the company cried out in mercy, "It is enough." The last stroke made with the paddle with which the tar was applied, was drawn across the naked eyeball, which caused severe pain, from which I never entirely recovered. In taking cold it often became inflamed, and quite painful. I was not taken from my horse, which was a very spirited animal. Two men held him by the bridle, while the one, elevated to a suitable height, applied the tar. My horse became so frightened that when they let him go he dashed off with such violence that I could not rein him up for some time, and narrowly escaped having my brains dashed out against a tree. If I ever felt for the souls of men, I did for theirs. When I got to my appointment, the Spirit of

the Lord so overpowered me, that I fell prostrate in prayer before him for my enemies. The Lord, no doubt, granted my request, for the man who put on the tar, and several others of them, were afterward converted.

The next morning a man who was not a professor of religion, came to the house where I had lodged the previous night, and calling out my host, he informed him that a mob intended to attack me that morning on my way to my appointment. They agreed among themselves—I was not yet let into the secret—that the man of the house should take the main road, and that the informant should conduct me by a different road not so likely to be interrupted. We proceeded some distance, when we discovered horses tied, and men sauntering about at a cross-road. My guide thought it was rather a suspicious state of things, and bore off, conducting me by a circuitous route to my appointment. My friend who had taken the main road, came to a bridge, beneath which several men had concealed themselves; and as soon as they heard the noise on the bridge, they came rushing out with weapons in hand. When they discovered their disappointment, they appeared to be somewhat confused. The man assumed surprise, and inquired what was the design of the movement. At length they re-

plied, though with apparent reluctance, that they were waiting for the preacher. "What are you going to do with him?" inquired the man. "Why, we are going to tie him to a tree, and whip him till he promises to preach no more," was their answer. The group seen by myself and guide was a detachment, I afterward learned, from the same company, designed to prevent the possibility of my escape. But the snare was broken and I escaped.

Then it was reported that I had been shot in an attempt to rob a man; that I was blacked, but on being washed was found to be Gatch, the Methodist preacher. I suppose they thought they had succeeded so far as to deter me from ever coming back again. But in four weeks I put to silence the report. I never missed an appointment from the persecution through which I had to pass, or the danger to which I was exposed. At another appointment there was a number of guards brought for defense; if the mob had come according to expectation, I suppose there would have been a conflict. I sometimes felt great timidity, but in the hour of danger my fears always vanished. This I considered a clear fulfillment of the promise which says, "Lo, I am with you always."

A very worthy young man who was an ex-

horter and class-leader, was in the employment of a Presbyterian minister living near Bladensburg; and while laboring in the field, some of the persecutors whipped him so cruelly that the shirt upon his back, though made of the most substantial material, was literally cut to pieces. His employer took the matter in hand, and had them arraigned before the court, and they were severely punished. This put an end to persecution in Frederick circuit. Our last quarterly meeting for the year was held in the neighborhood of Bladensburg. Mr. Rankin was with us, and I gave them my last address with a feeling heart, and set out for conference, to be held in Baltimore, May 21, 1776.

“Here Mr. Gatch closes his second year under the appointment of the conference. He is still found suffering, as well as doing the will of his Master. He could well say, at this period, that he had been in perils by sickness, in perils by false brethren, and in perils by those who were the open and avowed enemies of the truth. He was, perhaps, the subject of as much, or more, persecution for his Master’s sake, than any of his cotemporaries. This can not now be explained, removed as we are from the scenes of his conflict. Those who knew him well, accord to him a mild and conciliatory turn of mind; yet he was not easily turned aside from duty.

He has been heard to say, judging, probably, from the rage and cruelty of the mob, into whose hands he had fallen the day before, and from the severe manner in which they had whipped the young man in the field, that had he fallen into their hands when lying in wait for him at the bridge, his life would probably have been taken; 'for,' said he, 'I should never have made the promise that they intended to distort from me.' But that God who saved the prophet from the rage of Ahab, delivered him from the hand of his enemies.

"This year we find him engaged in three different circuits, while the changes and formations of new circuits which were constantly taking place, would prevent a correct statement of the precise number added in any particular place."

Mr. Gatch says: Mr. Rankin asked me if I was willing, at this conference, to take an appointment in Virginia. I gave him to understand that I could have no objection. So my next appointment was to Hanover circuit. I had the privilege of Mr. Shadford's company into Virginia, he also having an appointment to that state. My circuit was very large. It lay on both sides of James river, and was a part of six counties. But it appeared like a new world of grace. The Baptists, who pre-

ceded us, had encountered and rolled back the wave of persecution. Shubal Stearns and Daniel Marshal, who were the first-fruits of George Whitefield's labors in the east, had become Baptist members of the separate order. They had traveled extensively through the state, and others, through their instrumentality, were raised up, and became faithful and zealous ministers, and they endured a great deal of persecution. As a token of respect, I will here name John Waller, with whom I became intimate. He was an American in sentiment, a good preacher, and suffered much for the cause. He was confined in jail, first and last, one hundred and thirteen days, in different counties. Mr. Garrett and Mr. M'Roberts, two ministers of the Church of England, who did not confine their labor to their respective parishes, had also preached in these parts, and we entered into their labors.

The congregations on the circuit were very large, so that we had frequently to preach in orchards and in the grove. Mr. Rankin was with us at our first quarterly meeting. Though the labors of the circuits were hard, yet they were rendered pleasant to me till the fall of the year, when the weather became cool. From preaching out of doors to large congregations, which made it necessary to extend the voice, my health

failed; and my lungs became so affected that for some time I was entirely unable to preach. Mr. Shadford, who had been appointed to Brunswick circuit, attended our second quarterly meeting, and I took his place. My health remained so poor that it was a considerable time before I could reach the circuit. On my way I lay sick two weeks at the house of Mr. St. Patrick. I thought him the most holy person I ever saw. He seemed to breathe in an atmosphere of prayer, and enjoy communion with God at all times, even while engaged in the secular employments of life. I found it good to be afflicted at the house of such a saint, and his society and example were a blessing to me. When I got into my circuit I was able to preach ~~but~~ seldom. Sometimes it was with great difficulty I attempted to pray in public. It appeared to me that my lungs were entirely gone. Frequently I would have to raise up in the bed to get my breath. I felt it even a difficulty to live. The sensation of my whole system was as though thousands of pins were piercing me. While in the north, I had to contend with persecution; now bodily affliction attended me. At times I felt comfortable; but not being able to serve the circuit, was a great affliction to my feelings.

Mr. Garrett lived in the bounds of this

circuit. He labored extensively, and was very useful. Several preachers were raised up under his ministry, who became connected with our society, and some of them itinerated. He fitted up his barn for our accommodation, and it became a regular preaching-place, where quarterly meetings were occasionally held. The hospitalities of his house were generously conferred upon us, while he was truly a nursing father to Methodist preachers. Mr. Shadford had spent the principal part of his time for two years on this circuit. His ministry had been owned of the Lord. Great numbers had embraced religion; some professed sanctification, and the societies were comfortably established in the Gospel of their salvation. I was in company with one of the preachers raised up under Mr. Garrett's ministry, whom I heard had professed sanctification. I spoke to him on the subject. He said he had once professed it, but afterward concluded that he must have been deceived. I inquired for the reason. He said his wife became sick, apparently nigh unto death, and he could not give her up. I asked him if she did die—I knew she was still living. He answered no. "Then," said I, "you was right, as it was not the will of God she should die." I exhorted him to hold fast faith, and make a proper use of it; for then it will be like the flaming sword.

in the east of the garden, turning every way, and then will our confidence in God remain unshaken.

Mr. Garrett attended our quarterly meeting and rendered good service. The Spirit of the Lord moved upon the souls of the people. My own soul was greatly refreshed. In the latter part of my time on the circuit, I had more strength of body, and the Lord blessed me with the spirit of preaching. I had a great attachment to the people of the circuit, and hope to meet many of them in the kingdom of our heavenly Father. After our last quarterly meeting, I set out for the conference to be held in Baltimore, May 20, 1777. At this conference I received an appointment to Sussex circuit, in Virginia. The young man who was appointed to the same circuit, failed to serve, but his place was supplied. This was a pleasant circuit, and it contained many promising societies, and the prospects were encouraging. But I remained unable to do effective service. Sometimes I was unable to do any work at all, and while on the circuit I never preached an entire week without being exhausted. In consequence of my inability to serve the people, a third preacher was sent to our aid. The forbearance and kindness of the friends to me, were all that I could desire. When from the

critical state of my health they thought it unsafe for me to travel alone, they sent a person to accompany me from one appointment to another.

One Sabbath morning, while on my way to my appointment, accompanied by Frederick Boner, late of Green county, then a youth of about eighteen years, I was met by two men, of whom I had no knowledge, of a stout and rough appearance. They caught hold of my arms, and turned them in opposite directions with such violence that I thought my shoulders would be dislocated; and it caused the severest pain I ever felt. The torture, I concluded, must resemble that of the rack. My shoulders were so bruised that they turned black, and it was a considerable time before I recovered the use of them. My lungs remained seriously affected, and my system was so debilitated that my prospect for serving the Church as formerly failed. I thought I must of necessity retire from the work. This to me was a gloomy reflection, and my mind became much dejected. I remained on the circuit till fall, when the preachers met to exchange appointments. Hanover, that formerly lay on both sides of James river, had been so altered as to leave it only on the north side. It was again divided so as to make it a four weeks' circuit, which cut off a

part of the north. It was agreed in council that I should take a young man and go to the part cut off, and try to form a new circuit, laboring only as my strength would permit. After making a visit to my friends in Maryland, I returned and entered upon the duties assigned me. We enlarged our border, doors were freely opened, many received the Gospel in the love of its benefits, and by conference we had formed a four weeks' circuit.

On the 14th of January, 1778, I was married to Elizabeth Smith, of Powhatan county, Virginia. The family, previous to the reformation in Virginia, belonged to the Established Church, and lived in parson M'Robert's parish, who was friendly to the Methodist preachers, who first visited the south. Mr. Watters makes honorable mention of him. He said in his journal, "On my way I had the privilege of hearing Mr. M'Roberts preach Christ and him crucified to a listening multitude. He was the first minister of the Church of England I ever heard preach Christian experience." When the Baptists, who preceded the Methodists, first preached in the neighborhood of Mr. Smith, his two eldest sons joined, and became ministers of that denomination. George M. was of the separate order, and George S., who was a son by a second marriage, and a full brother

of Mrs. Gatch, was of the regular order. They removed to Kentucky, and were zealous preachers in their Church. The rest of the family were among the first-fruits of Methodism in Virginia. Mr. Smith was among its warm supporters. The conference of 1780 was held at his house. James, the remaining son, was a Methodist preacher. They all possessed respectable preaching talents.

I will here narrate a circumstance in the history of the family, which, while it shows the deep depravity of the human heart, and the evil of slavery, may also show a Providential interposition in the preservation of Mrs. Gatch's life. Her mother died when she was quite small, after which she went to live with her grandmother. While there, the husband of an aunt being from home, the grandmother proposed taking Elizabeth with her to the house of her son-in-law. On leaving, without assigning any reason, she left Elizabeth at home. While at her daughter's a negro man, who was a house servant, became offended with a young woman that lived with the family, and to get revenge without being detected, he murdered the grandmother, the young woman, and several children. The negro was apprehended and gibbeted—a method of punishing capital offenses in that day.

The conference this year was held at Leesburg. During the year we organized a four-weeks' circuit, called it Havanna, and reported two hundred and fifty-one members. In consequence of the imperfect state of my health, the conference thought it not advisable to appoint me to a circuit, but left me to do what I could where my services might be most needed.

"At this conference Mr. Gatch's name disappeared from the Minutes; and though Bishop Asbury frequently urged, after his removal to the west, the propriety of reinserting his name in the Minutes, claiming that he still belonged to the itinerancy, from the fact that neither by his own act, nor that of the conference, he had ever become disconnected, it seems not, however, to have been entered on the Minutes of the conference till after his removal to the west, when, without his knowledge, it was inserted by the request of the quarterly conference of Milford circuit.

"Some explanation will be necessary in this place to show the position that Mr. Gatch still held in the ministry after he failed to do regular circuit labor; and the reader will the more easily understand the preaching tours he made, some account of which will be given by extracts from his manuscripts.

"The relation of supernumerary, or superannuated preachers had not been instituted, nor yet had the practice been introduced of locating those preachers who could no longer serve in the itinerancy. These usages were found necessary from experience. The names of many of the first Methodist preachers who labored in the vineyard of the Lord in America have been silently dropped, and the history of the Church can never show the circumstances under which they retired. We have seen that in 1774 Mr. Gatch acted as an assistant to the general superintendent. In 1777 a committee of five was chosen to take the general superintendency in the place of the incumbent, who, with his countrymen, except Mr. Asbury, returned to England. The committee consisted of Gatch, Drumgold, Glendening, Ruffard, and Watters. The names of the preachers appear to have been entered to designate their respective fields of labors rather than to show their relation to the conference. Mr. Gatch appears to have been the only member of the committee of superintendents that served at the regular conference of 1779, and also that of 1780. He was placed at the head of the movement made by the conference in 1779, in regard to the administration of the ordinances, which tended to a separation from

the Established Church, and an independent organization.

"After the difficulties growing out of this procedure—which will hereafter be explained—were adjusted, Mr. Asbury was called to the general superintendency of the entire work north and south. Being young he had need of the assistance of men experienced in the ministry. The plan of districts, with their presiding elders, did not belong to this period of the Church; and there were constant accessions of young men zealous and useful, but who required the instructions and restraints of older preachers. Mr. Gatch was expected to perform this service on those circuits which were most convenient to him, so far as might be consistent with his domestic engagements. In the performance of this trust we find him making frequent tours in different directions.

"The manuscript of Mr. Gatch, on which the writer chiefly depends for materials, becomes more varied at this point, in consequence of the new relation and the domestic responsibilities of the married state; but the matter of the journal must be abridged to keep the work within the bounds intended. Occasional extracts will be made on secular subjects, which are likely to be profitable to those in a similar situation. From his notes

between the conference of 1778 and 1779, the following extracts are made:"

In the summer of 1772 there was a strange phenomenon in the heavens. A light appeared to break through the sky in the east, to the appearance of the eye covering a space as large as a common house, and varying in its different hues. This light became more frequent and awful in its appearance in the progress of time. Sometimes it would present a sublime aspect. A pillar or cloud of smoke would seem to lie beneath, while frightful flames would appear to rise to a great height, and spread over an extensive space; at other times it would look like streams of blood falling to the earth.

While God was thus revealing his glory and majesty to the natural eye, there was great outpouring of the Spirit in different parts of the country. Many precious souls were converted; many preachers were reared up who run to and fro; and the knowledge of God was greatly increased in the earth. I could but think there was in the prophecy of Joel an allusion to these times—chap. ii, verse 28—“I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy; your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions;” 29, “And also upon the servants,”

etc.; 30, "And I will show wonders in the heavens, and in the earth blood and fire and pillars of smoke."

Though I labored this year in different parts of the work, it was under great bodily weakness. I moved into an old house on a small farm, where, with my own hands, I raised a little grain, cotton, etc., for family use. We had but little, but the Lord favored us with contentment, and the little that we had was, perhaps, better for us than more would have been.

"We are now brought to that part of the ministerial life in which the acts and doings of himself and his coadjutors possess more interest and lasting results than those of any other period. We refer to that difficulty which arose on the subject of administering the ordinances, while, as yet, the society had not a separate organization, and the ministry were unordained. Though the societies were so agitated for a time as to cause a partial separation, yet it will readily be perceived, by those who carefully look into the history of those events, that the Church, in its present organization, was the result of those movements; and unless primitive Methodism shall become marred by selfish and ultra men, it will always reflect the spirit of meekness and wisdom, by which the

early benefactors of the Church were influenced."

"It is due to the Methodist Episcopal Church, and to the early actors in its formation in this country, and especially to a faithful biography of Mr. Gatch, that some account should be given of the progress made, and of the difficulties overcome, at this period. The movement was considered by many an innovation; and that epithet is still applied to it by some. In the journals of some of the preachers of that day the subject is named, but not in such a way as to give a full understanding of it. By the lapse of time the interest in the events of this period is not impaired or lost; on the contrary, as the Church enlarges her borders, her early history becomes more interesting.

"Dr. Lee, in a work entitled 'The Life and Times of Jesse Lee,' has stated many things of general interest on this subject, and we shall use his statements on the present occasion. It is understood that he had the manuscripts of Mr. Gatch before him. In the seventy-fifth page of his work Mr. Lee says: 'As a positive institution of Christ, the Methodists not only greatly desired the sacraments, but felt it to be a duty thus to obey Christ, and have communion with him. This was a question of duty made by conscience, and in the adjustment of

which it was not only necessary to consult conscience, but to satisfy it. And the members of the Church were brought to the point, that they must either disobey Christ, or claim the sacrament at the hands of those through whose ministry the Gospel had been made to them the power of God unto salvation.' To omit ordinances so clearly and forcibly enjoined in the Scriptures, could not be thought of; the alternative, therefore, remained to receive the sacraments from the Established Church, or from those who were the instruments of their conversion. As a matter of conscience, they could not hesitate on this subject. They believed that their spiritual instructors had been endued by the Holy Spirit with power from on high, as was daily evidenced by the success which crowned their efforts. On the other hand, the clergy of the Established Church seemed to partake of the spirit of the world in their daily walk and conversation, and their preaching was without power. They claimed the succession, and the exclusive right to administer the ordinances; but this claim did not seem to bear the sanctions of the Spirit of God. And it could not be expected that a people so separate from the world, its fashions and maxims, as were the Methodists of that day, would be satisfied to receive the sacraments at the hands of those

who had not been converted, and whose lives were not conformed to the mind and will of God."

"The Methodist preachers felt great delicacy and backwardness on this subject. They felt it to be their duty for a time to discourage the importunities of their members upon this subject. At the first conference held in America, in June, 1773, it was agreed by all the preachers present, as one of the rules for their government, that 'all the people among whom we labor are to be earnestly exhorted to attend the Church, and receive the ordinances there; but in a particular manner to press the people of Maryland and Virginia to the observance of the rule.'

"The language of this rule shows at how early a date the Methodists of Virginia evinced their unwillingness to receive the ordinance from the Established Church. Earnestly as the ministers may have pressed the observance of the above rule, it is believed that very few of the members conformed to it. There was a repugnance, from the reasons above stated, to the observance of a most solemn duty, in a manner which their own consciences could not sanction. They wished their own ministers to administer to them the sacraments, as it seemed to them the commission from on high to preach the

Gospel was of higher authority than the ordinances of men. This matter became a subject of deep and earnest prayer among the preachers and others. The exigency was great, as it required a surrender of the sacrament, or that it should be administered to the Methodists by their own preachers."

"Finding that the membership, or a large proportion of them, were practically opposed to the rule adopted by the conference, the preachers yielded to a necessity which they could not avoid, and proceeded to administer the ordinances as the spiritual wants of the Church required. This was not prohibited by the Scriptures; and although it was not expressly sanctioned, it was, undoubtedly, in accordance with the great duties enjoined by them. The sacrament was instituted as a means of grace, and as such was calculated to increase the faith and influence the lives of professors. In this view it would seem that the preachers were not only justified in administering this ordinance, but it became their duty to do so under the necessity which existed. Finally, the subject was referred to Mr. Wesley, and it constitutes an important event in the early history of Methodism in America."

"In the Minutes of the conferences there is nothing found on this subject from 1773 till

the session of 1780. In the manuscript journal of Mr. Gatch it appears that at the conference of 1777, the question was asked, 'What shall be done with respect to the ordinances?' The answer was, 'Our next conference will, if God permit, show us more clearly.' This question, according to Mr. Gatch, was the subject of inquiry at the conference at Deer Creek meeting-house, Harford county, Maryland. The conference to which it was referred for consideration, was held in Leesburg, Virginia; at which conference the question came up and was answered: 'We unanimously agree to refer it to the next conference.' This subject very naturally increased in interest till it became to preachers and people a most absorbing one, which forced itself on the consideration of the conferences. The next conference before which this now exciting question was to be considered, was held at Broken-back Church, Fluvanna county, Virginia, in May, 1799."

"From the journal of Mr. Gatch it appears, that at that conference, 'after the transaction of business of a general character, the subject of the administration of the ordinances was discussed at large, and it was resolved in questions and answers, as was the usual mode of proceeding at that day: "What are our reasons for taking up the administration of the ordi-

nances among us? Answer. Because the Epis-
copal establishment is now dissolved, and,
therefore, in almost all our circuits the mem-
bers are without the ordinances. Question.
What preachers do approve of this step? An-
swer. Isham Tulun, Charles Hopkins, Nelson
Reed, Reuben Ellis, P. Gatch, Thomas Morris,
James Morris, James Foster, John Major, An-
drew Yeargin, Henry Willis, Francis Poy-
thress, John Sagmon, Leroy Cole, Carter Cole,
James Q'Kelly, William Moore, Samuel Roe.
Question. Is it proper to have a committee?
Answer. Yes, and by a vote of the conference.
Question. Who are the committee? Answer.
Philip Gatch, James Foster, L. Cole, and Reu-
ben Ellis. Question. What power do the
preachers vest in the committee? Answer.
They agree to observe all the resolutions of the
said committee, so far as the said committee
shall adhere to the Scriptures. Question. What
form of ordination shall be observed to author-
ize any preacher to administer? Answer. By
that of a presbytery. Question. How shall
the presbytery be appointed? Answer. By a
majority of the preachers. Question. Who
are the presbytery? Answer. P. Gatch, R.
Ellis, James Foster, and, in case of necessity,
Leroy Cole. Question. What power is vested
in the presbytery by this choice? Answer.

First, to administer the ordinances themselves; second, to authorize any other preacher or preachers, approved of by them, by the form of laying on of hands. Question. What is to be observed as touching the administration of the ordinances, and to whom shall they be administered? Answer. To those who are under our care and discipline. Question. Shall we rebaptize any under our care? Answer. No. Question. What mode shall we adopt for the administration of baptism? Answer. Either sprinkling or plunging as the parents or adult may choose. Question. What ceremony shall be used in the administration? Answer. Let it be according to our Lord's commandment—Matthew xxviii, 19—short and extempore. Question. Shall the sign of the cross be used? Answer. No. Question. Who shall receive the charge of the child after baptism for its future instruction? Answer. The parent or person having the care of the child, with advice from the preacher. Question. What mode shall be adopted for the administration of the Lord's supper? Answer. Kneeling is thought the most proper, but in case of conscience may be left to the choice of the communicant. Question. What ceremony shall be observed in this ordinance? Answer. After singing, prayer, and exhortation, the preacher shall

deliver the bread, saying, 'The body of our Lord Jesus Christ,' etc., after the Church order."

"The conference at which these measures were adopted was the regularly-constituted session of the year, and had full ecclesiastical power, according to the customs of Methodism in those days, to do all that is here recorded. There was a meeting of preachers held in Kent, Delaware, the 28th of April, 1779, who were opposed to the action above stated, and with the view to counteract it; but their meeting was not a regular conference of preachers, in connection with the Rev. John Wesley, although it was so asserted in their Minutes. The circumstances which kept Mr. Asbury from his regular labors in the Church prevented his attendance at the Leesburg conference; but this did not affect the authority of that conference. The cause of Mr. Asbury's absence is presumed to have been his being an Englishman, and the Revolution then being in progress some prejudice was excited against him.

"The previous suspension of action on the subject of the ordinances was partly attributable to the spirit which was more distinctly expressed in the meeting at Kent. That meeting was called, it was said, for the convenience of northern preachers, all of whom knew that the

measure would be finally acted on at the ensuing regular conference in Virginia. Mr. Waters, who attended the Kent meeting, was specially charged to express, by way of protest, to the ensuing regular conference, their opposition to any action on the ordinances. Some of the preachers who were present at the Flu-vanna conference did not approve of the measure adopted, and these took their appointments north of the line of the other preachers. They were charged by their opponents with having destroyed the unity of the Church by a departure from the unpretending simplicity and doctrines of Methodism. This opposition was principally the result of preconceived opinions and prejudices. The doctrine of succession, so perseveringly maintained by the Established Church, had made a strong impression on minds which, for want of leisure or capacity, had not investigated the subject; but where it had been looked into by an unbiased mind, the weight of the argument was found rather with the Catholics, who also claim the exclusive right of succession from the apostles.

“‘The committee invested with the power, in the discharge of their functions, proceeded to ordain each other, and then to ordain those preachers who were desirous of receiving ordination.’ This procedure was novel, but it was

not unscriptural. The dogmas of Popery were opposed to it, and those of the Established Church; but it invaded no rights private or public, or which belonged to any religious association; it contravened no institution of the Savior, nor any precept of revelation. It was in accordance with the duties enjoined in the Scriptures, and was a blessing to the Church. Scripturally it was a power to be exercised by those endued with the Spirit of God, and who had been so called and chosen for the ministry. To a well-instructed conscience this view was more satisfactory than the one authoritatively urged; that, no matter how immoral the instruments may have been through which the succession was transmitted, it must be received as of Divine authority.

“In one aspect of this affair, and only in one, it may be regretted. It was, perhaps, premature, and without the concurrence of the whole body of preachers. Owing to this it was only partially adopted, and led to debates and divisions among the preachers and people. The peace of the societies was somewhat disturbed, and the unity of Methodism received a violent shock. A cloud overshadowed it, and for a time the demon of discord paralyzed its energies and defeated its plans. At the close of the year succeeding, the conference at Bro-

ken-back Church showed that there was a decrease in the membership of the Church.

"The members composing the meeting in 1779, in connection with some of those who participated in the Fluvanna conference, held another meeting in Baltimore on the 24th of April, 1780. This meeting is put down in the Minutes as the regular conference, and there is no record of the one held in Virginia, although it was appointed, both as to time and place, by the regularly-constituted conference of 1779. J. Lee calls the Baltimore conference the eighth conference; speaks of the one held in Virginia during the ensuing month, and says, 'The proceedings of both must be considered together, as it respects the general work.' But in making the Baltimore conference the eighth one in the history of Methodism in America, he evidently omits the meeting in Delaware the preceding year as a conference, and also the one held in Virginia. The latter was legally constituted, and should be enumerated as the conference of 1780. The reasons for transferring the right, power, and title to the conference to Baltimore, are as strange and unaccountable as are the reasons for inserting the proceedings of the meeting at Delaware in the Minutes, and omitting those of the conference held in Virginia. We can

not penetrate the cause of these facts, and the only reasonable conjecture is, that as the breach in the Church was healed in Virginia, it was mutually agreed to omit all mention of it in the Minutes of the conference at which it was effected. But, notwithstanding this disposition of the official business of the conference, the proceedings that led to the restoration of peace and unity to the afflicted societies are too full of interest, and occupy too prominent a place in the history of the times to be omitted."

"Among the items of business we find the following resolutions of the Baltimore conference, respecting the subject now under consideration:

"Question. Does this whole conference disapprove the step our brethren in Virginia have taken? Answer. Yes. Question. Do we look upon them no longer as Methodists in connection with Mr. Wesley and us till they come back? Answer. Agreed. Question. Shall brothers Asbury, Garrettson, and Watters attend the Virginia conference, and inform them of our proceedings in this matter, and receive their answer? Answer. Yes."

"Mr. Watters informs us that two members of the Virginia conference—Messrs. P. Gatch and R. Ellis—were present at the Baltimore conference, and endeavored to prevent a total

disunion. They found, however, very little encouragement, and no kind of sympathy. Indeed, they thought their brethren dealt hardly with them, and there was little appearance of any thing but an entire separation. They complained that Mr. Watters was the only one that treated them with affection and tenderness. Before adjourning, however, wiser counsels, if not better feelings, gained the ascendant in the conference; and, for the sake of unity, they resolved to attempt an adjustment of the difficulty. They accordingly appointed a committee of three, with special instructions, but not very limited powers, and sent them to Virginia."

"The Virginia conference for the year 1780, was held at Manakintown, in Powhattan county, on the 8th of May. To this body the committee of reconciliation appointed by the preachers at Baltimore repaired, immediately after their adjournment, and entered into negotiations for the preservation of the peace and the promotion of the unity of Methodism. They were cordially received by their Virginia brethren. Mr. Watters says: 'We found our brethren as loving and as full of zeal as ever, and as fully determined on persevering in their newly-adopted mode; for to all of their former arguments, they now added—what with many

was infinitely stronger than all the arguments in the world—that the Lord approved, and had blessed his own ordinances by them administered the past year. With these convictions on one side, and the special instruction to demand, as a condition of union, a positive abandonment of the ordinances on the other, the prospect of reconciliation was indeed doubtful and gloomy.' The writer we are quoting says, in continuation of his account, 'We had a great deal of loving conversation, with many tears; but I saw no bitterness, no shyness, no judging each other. We wept, and prayed, and sobbed, but neither would agree to the other's terms.'

"Ten days were consumed in these honest efforts to heal the breach between those who, notwithstanding, were 'of one mind and heart in the knowledge and love of God.' In the mean time, Mr. Watters preached to the assembled parties, on what may be regarded a most appropriate text for such an occasion: 'We are journeying to the place of which the Lord said, I will give it you: come, then, with us, and we will do thee good: for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel.' Num. x, 29. Still, darkness dwelt upon the subject; and all hopes failing of any accommodation, the committee resolved to give up the matter, and retrace their steps to the north. During the

evening preceding the time fixed for their departure, and while Mr. Asbury was on his knees alone in his room, in fervent prayer for God's help and blessing, and Messrs. Watters and Garretson were engaged in the same pious exercises together, in a room over the one in which the conference was sitting, the conference resolved to accept a proposition submitted by Mr. Asbury to suspend the administration of the ordinances for one year, to submit the matter in controversy to Mr. Wesley, and for all the preachers to meet the next year in a kind of general conference in Baltimore, for a full and final adjustment of the whole question in controversy."

"The adoption of this resolution created a jubilée of joy in the hearts of all concerned in the affair. They wept, they shouted, they praised God, and were full of peace and love. It was the triumph of Christian affection, the submission of private judgment and personal right to the will of a majority, and the general good of the whole. By this act the bonds of Methodism were again riveted, and the societies were drawn into closer fellowship with each other. The preachers were bound together in a 'bundle of love,' 'with a threefold cord,' and God, out of the holy place, approved their work, and shed forth into their hearts the grace

and comfort of the Holy Ghost. The readiness of these men of God to abandon a measure so long and carefully studied, so deliberately and prayerfully adopted, and so happily and successfully exercised, affords a beautiful illustration of the meekness of their wisdom and the power of their humility. Their subsequent success in winning souls to Christ, might have been predicted with entire confidence. It was, under the blessing of God, a direct consequence of their unselfish anxiety to 'do good of every possible sort to the souls and bodies of men.'

It is impossible for any considerate mind to view this controversy and not be favorably impressed with the conduct of the southern Churches. The conference at Baltimore was unyielding, if not unreasonable, in some of its positions. The southern messengers who attended it were scarcely treated with Christian courtesy. A determination was shown to cut off the southern Churches, unless they abandoned a measure which they had adopted under the deepest convictions of duty. The south had proceeded in no factious spirit. Their entire action in this affair was characterized by exemplary piety, and a desire to profit by the use of all the Scriptural means of grace; and they were blessed in their efforts. This was an

assurance to them that they had done nothing wrong in the sight of God. They were not condemned by the word. If they erred, it was under the influence of a tender conscience and a devoted heart. Such a course should have softened the hearts and awakened the sympathies of their northern brethren.

“Mr. Asbury was a devoted and pious man. He was admirably calculated to lead in the great reformation, through the instrumentality of Methodism. But he had great reverence for authority in Church and state. It was natural that he should look to England, and especially to Mr. Wesley, for instruction in a matter of so much importance to the rising Church with which he was so fully identified. After the departure of the other English preachers, he was regarded as the leader in the Church; and his distinguished position and eminent services fully justified the early confidence that was reposed in him.

“It must be admitted, that although Mr. Asbury, and the other members of the conference who were sent a committee to the Virginia conference, were unyielding in their demands of submission, yet their personal deportment showed a Christian affection and sympathy which made a strong impression on their brethren. They mingled their tears, their sighs, and

their prayers together in sweetest harmony and faith. They invoked the direction of the Spirit of God, and the result, unexpected to most of them, was brought about under circumstances so extraordinary as to authorize the belief that it was the work of Providence. It is true that the southern members who had been most exercised on the subject of the ordinances, were required to make a sacrifice by suspending them for a season; yet it seemed to be the only means which could unite the dissevered Church, and restore brotherly affection to the societies. In making this sacrifice, those who were required to make it were most blessed. This sufficiently appears by their future success, and the great influence they exercised. When such a spirit prevails, a Church can not be divided. The most devoted will bear hardness of their brethren, and suffer wrong, rather than be cut off from the society. They will discharge all the selfish feelings of humanity, and humble themselves before the Lord, that they may gain their brethren, and advance the true interests of the Church. Such were the fruits of the exemplary piety of the Virginia conference.

"The destitution of the southern Church is shown by a few extracts from cotemporary writers. Mr. Garretson says—p. 125 of his Life—‘Many places, especially in the south,

were entirely destitute of a settled ministry of any denomination. The Methodist preachers were not allowed to perform even the rites of the burial of their dead.' This was an intolerable grievance. No one charged the south with having acted immorally or unscripturally. Mr. Watters says—page 72 of his journal—' My great concern was not whether we should or should not adopt them, [the ordinances,] but on account of the division I was certain would take place on their being adopted. I could freely, and without hesitation, have agreed either way to have prevented one of the greatest evils that could befall us, as I conceived.' Dr. Lee concludes that the movement was premature and without, or because it had not, the concurrence of the whole body; but this remark does not seem to have much force, as it was the rule of the conference to decide all matters on which it acted by a majority of votes. Mr. Watters says—page 65—' At the conference of 1775, the measure found many advocates. It was with considerable difficulty that a large majority was prevailed upon to lay it over again till the next conference.' The result is corroborated by this statement. After the return of those to the north who attended the Virginia conference, and dissented from its action, and those of the north who were detained

at the called conference that would, probably, have acted with the south had they been present, still the south included a greater number of circuits, stationed the most preachers, and, according to the Minutes, had between one and two thousand more members under their care.

“On the subject of constituting their ecclesiastical functions, Doctor Lee appears to have followed Doctor Watters, who says, ‘They determined on appointing a committee to ordain each other, and then all the rest.’ Mr. Garretson says ‘they set apart several of the eldest preachers to travel extensively, administer the sacraments,’ etc. This is probably the more accurate account. The presbytery did not ordain one another exclusively, but it was the united act of at least all the preachers who were members of the conference, who united in laying their hands upon those ordained, by which act they expressed their willingness to submit to the authority as constituted by the conference.”

“It would have been interesting at this day, if the arguments of the respective parties in regard to this measure had been preserved. The proposition upon a reunion was offered, it is said by Mr. Gatch, by those who adhered to southern measures, while the difficulty was in

its incipient stage. Mr. Asbury's unwillingness to accede was not, however, construed into a personal objection, but to a reluctance to approach Mr. Wesley in a way that might be thought to show an unwillingness any longer to sustain his authority."

"After the separation, an evident determination was discovered on the part of the south to persevere. The north, as the only alternative, took up the original proposition, and offered it back to those with whom it originated; but it was not accepted without debate and hesitation. The results of the year's experiment during the separation was favorable to the measure. The southern conference consisted of a body of preachers, talented, persevering, and pious—men suited to the perilous times of that day. These preachers, after the conference of 1780, were no longer a distinct body. Many of them were eminently useful for years. Ellis, Willes, Dickens, Read, Major, and Poythress were all distinguished ministers, and died in the itinerancy. In the account of their deaths their labors are stated. O'Kelly, though he afterward become disaffected, left the Church and drew others with him, for many years stood in the front rank of preachers. Tatum, Cole, Ggburn, and Gatch served the Church with great

usefulness in a local capacity till extreme old age. The three last-named persons were pioneers in the west. Others fell in the midst of their usefulness."

"The Methodist preachers at that day were self-denying and abstemious men. On every Friday they observed a fast, but their fasts were not limited to one day in a week. They often denied themselves of such articles of food as would please the appetite and pamper the flesh. This practice, together with preaching in the open air—which was necessary from the smallness of the houses and the crowds that flocked to hear them, especially in Virginia—proved too much for slender constitutions. A melancholy instance of one of these preachers will be given. James Foster, who was one of the presbytery in the southern organization, possessed good preaching abilities, was remarkably amiable in his disposition, and interesting in his personal appearance, and labored with great acceptance and usefulness. He was, however, so abstemious in his habits of life, that that, together with his labors in the ministry, proved too much for his physical strength, so that his mind sank with his body. Under mental derangement he wandered about for years till he was relieved by death. In this state he was still strict in his habits and inof-

fensive in his intercourse with the families he visited. He continued to take part in family worship, when called on, with much devotion and propriety."

"After the Virginia breach was healed the preachers at once assimilated in their labors in the common cause. The small decrease alluded to by Mr. Lee, in the membership, might have been owing, in part, to a defect in the Minutes. In Mr. Gatch's manuscript there are two appointments named that are not in the Minutes, though he does not give the number of members. Another cause was, perhaps, the war of the Revolution, which raged, especially in the south, in all its desolating consequences. Mr. Gatch says 'the measure was adopted to keep the societies together, which I believe was of the Lord, for he greatly blessed us.'

"Mr. Wesley's consent to the adoption of the ordinances being obtained, our brethren who were first opposed to it acquiesced."

Mr. Gatch continues his journal, and says: This year I undertook, by farming, to raise a support for my family. We had not in those days the relation of supernumerary or superannuated preachers. When any one left the field of labor, either from choice or necessity, he had to do the best he could. Did I lack

any thing? Nothing, Lord. Through life, ever since I put my hand to the Gospel plow, the Lord has provided for me, with the addition of persecution.

A captain came from the army to visit a brother living in the neighborhood, who was a Methodist and a captain also. While at his brother's he became concerned for the salvation of his soul. He came to my house when I was about leaving home to fill a round of appointments. I prevailed on him to accompany me, and on our tour he got religion. Immediately he took his knife from his pocket, cut the ruffles from his bosom, and had his hair—which, according to the custom of the time, was long—cut off. After preaching at a quarterly meeting on our route, I felt so exhausted that I thought I could have no further enjoyment of the meeting; but God frequently makes his power manifest in our weakness. In love-feast the captain's servant became graciously wrought upon. My eye affected my heart. Faith comes by seeing as well as by hearing. The Spirit of the Lord came upon me. In a short time the house appeared to be filled with his presence, and the work became general. Some were converted. I never had so great a blessing before in a public congregation. A preacher present sought to stay the

exercises, but could not. He called it my wild-fire, but it was the Lord who was carrying on the baptism of the Holy Ghost and of fire. The flame was sweet—one like unto the Son of God was with us.

During the summer I took a tour into Hanover circuit. I was at George Arnold's, in company with another preacher, and we took a walk into the cornfield. The corn was in beautiful silk. We separated for the purpose of secret prayer. Here the Lord visited me in an uncommon manner. His gracious Spirit so operated on my body, soul, and spirit, that it was visible to the preacher who was with me. After waiting some time on me, he started to the house, but the cases of Enoch and Elijah came to his mind, and he turned back to see what would become of me. I felt in a measure like I was in heaven, and some that I knew were with me.

When I heard of the death of Bishop Asbury, that took place at George Arnold's, it brought fresh to my recollection what I had enjoyed at the same place, and I felt assured that he had gone to rest. I was much blessed in this journey, and returned home in safety. My wife's heart was in the work when I left home to serve the Church; we parted in peace, and when I returned we met in love. I once started

to be absent some time from home, and finding that I had forgotten a book I intended to take with me, I returned, and my wife met me with her arm bleeding, where it had been pierced by the spindle of a big wheel which had fallen against her. She was so injured that I thought it would be imprudent for me to leave home; but she insisted that I should go on and fill my appointments. After I left her, the thought struck me that an enemy had done this, but he was foiled in his purpose.

I had planted cotton seed in the spring, and it was nipped by the frost and blighted, so that I had to leave the cornfield for the purpose of replanting; and while replanting the second time I felt much discouraged. I was led to inquire whether I had asked God's blessing upon it. I felt convicted for this omission, and concluded then to ask God to bless the labor of my hands. He gave us a good crop; enough and to spare. I now saw what it was, like Enoch and Noah, to walk with God. It is our privilege to ask God's blessing on all our lawful employments, and what is our privilege becomes our duty.

A great revival took place in Powhattan county, Virginia. It commenced with the children of Methodist parents, and extended into Baptist families. It spread generally over the

state of Virginia, and into Carolina. Six young men, the fruits of this revival in our neighborhood, became preachers; five of them, namely, D. Asbury, Chastain, Pope, Maxey, and Locket, became traveling preachers.

In September, 1781, the war of the Revolution terminated, and all religious denominations were freed from civil restraint, and had the privilege of worshiping God under their own vine and fig-tree. Here begins the millennium-freedom from all oppression but of sin and Satan; and there is Jesus at the right hand of the Father, ready to give repentance and remission of sins to both Jew and Gentile. We ought never to forget the rock from whence we were hewn, and the pit from whence we were dug; but keep in mind the years of the right hand of the Most High. We should not interfere with the plans of God by forbidding others who are casting out devils in the name of Christ, though they go not with us. The work of saving souls belongs to God, and he has a right to save by whom he will.

My two oldest children embraced religion when quite young. A great deal depends upon parents sowing the good seed of the kingdom in the hearts of their children when young. Early impressions are the most lasting. Nothing should be so dear to parents as the salva-

tion of the souls of their children. God has brought them into a state of justification and life, and this spirit of life is what God operates upon. The Lord from heaven is a quickening Spirit to give life to our souls, and to raise them up into the favor and image of God. From this arises all that sensibility and tenderness of soul that is discovered in children.

My health became much improved in the course of a few years. We had to use mineral water, which, though disagreeable at first, became pleasant to the taste by use. This water, and exercise on the farm, I believe, contributed much to the restoration of my health.

I was brought for a time into a state of deep exercise of mind, and was afraid to communicate my situation to any person. At length, being one Sabbath morning in company with another preacher, we took a walk together. I had heard that he also had passed through deep and sore trials, so I ventured to make my case known to him. He took hold of it in such a way that my heart was soon melted into tenderness. Every obstruction was removed, and I was filled with love and gratitude to God. Here I saw the necessity of possessing a living faith that is always active.

"The next item in the manuscripts of Mr. Gatch, relates to the first removal he made,

which was about ten years after his marriage, and, consequently, in the year 1788, and included about half the time he resided in the state of Virginia. He has failed to give dates in most instances, and we shall have to avail ourselves of the advantage of those periods that are distinctly marked by his sojourn in the several places where he resided. The events that he notices are, no doubt, recorded in the order in which the events transpired."

"As the domestic cares of Mr. Gatch increased, the field of his ministerial labors was restricted. But his zeal was not abated, and his efforts were continued in the cause of religion, as he had opportunity. Of this fact we have abundant evidence in the testimonials furnished by those who had an intimate knowledge of his manner of life. This will appear in the further progress of his history. A few paragraphs will embrace all that he says of the preceding ten years spent in Virginia. We will here introduce the statement of a friend that refers more particularly to that part of his life, of which the informant had an intimate knowledge. 'He generally preached twice on the Sabbath, sometimes from ten to fifteen miles distant, attended many funerals, frequently administered the ordinance of baptism and the rites of matrimony. Many became convicted.'

and were converted through his instrumentality. His house was a retreat for Methodist preachers, and his company much desired by them. He stood high as a preacher among ministers of other denominations, as well as those of his own Church, and was beloved by all Christians.”

“His first removal, he says, was caused by one of his neighbors, who constructed a dam across the stream that ran through his farm, which caused the back-water to flow near his house. ‘My wife, fearing it would cause sickness, and the danger of the children being drowned, became dissatisfied, and we moved two miles to a place I had purchased. This change subjected us to inconvenience, as it was farther from the Church than our late residence. Our new neighbors were principally Baptists, and were very friendly. During our stay at this place, we were favored with a gracious revival of religion, both in the Methodist and Baptist Churches.’ At this place he manumitted his slaves. He says in relation to that subject: ‘I never felt favorable to slavery. Two of my brothers-in-law and myself liberated our slaves. I believe it caused others to reflect on the evil. A young man, who soon after took sick, emancipated his slaves in his will.’ The deed of emancipation, now before us, com-

mences as follows: 'Know all men by these presents, that I, Philip Gatch, of Powhattan county, do believe that all men are by nature equally free; and from a clear conviction of the injustice of depriving my fellow-creatures of their natural rights, do hereby emancipate, or set free, the following persons.' The deed then gives the names of nine persons, the number liberated. The deed was executed December 8, 1780. After a residence of about five years in this place, he removed into Buckingham county." He says: I have no doubt my way was of the Lord.

"In all my ways thy hand I own,
Thy ruling providence I see;
Assist me still my course to run,
And still direct my paths to thee."

I took with me when I removed to Buckingham a valuable stock of cattle, with the prospect of realizing a good profit from them, but the Lord saw it was best to defeat this expectation. The cattle took the disease of the hollow horn, so that several of them died, and the cows failed in their milk. My feelings were depressed. I heard of a remedy, and called on a neighbor for assistance. The lady, who was a Presbyterian in her faith, inquired after the condition of the cattle. She ascribed the

visitation to the providence of God, designed for my good, and exhorted me to be resigned to his government. I yielded, and the gloom soon disappeared, and I felt greatly comforted, forgetting my misfortune, and resting under the mercy-seat in great peace. I applied the remedy recommended, and the disease was staid. No more of my cattle died, but they greatly increased in quality and numbers. "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth."

There had been a revival here a few years since under the ministry of Hope Hull, and a flourishing society of Methodists had been formed. The Baptists and Presbyterians were also well established and prosperous. The different denominations were much united. James Sanders, of the Baptist, and Drury Lacy, of the Presbyterian Church, were ministers of high standing. We dwelt together "in unity." We preached with and for each other, and the Lord again favored the neighborhood with his presence. A gracious revival took place, and Zion was greatly enlarged. The effects of the revival extended into the different Churches; indeed, we had all the advantages and privileges we could reasonably expect in a fallen world, one only excepted. I could not feel reconciled to die and leave my posterity in a land of slavery. Many of my

friends, on being informed of my inclination to remove to the North-western territory, inquired after my motive. This gave me an opportunity to converse with them on the evils of slavery. None justified the practice, but most of them held the truth in unrighteousness.

In my removal to Buckingham I had in view a settlement for life. I had purchased a thousand acres of land, of a good quality for that part of the country. I reduced five hundred acres of it to cultivation, and made such other improvements as were calculated to render my family comfortable. But the North-western territory, from the first accounts received of it, struck me as a desirable country, and I finally resolved to remove to it. I made my intention known to my family, and they appeared reconciled to go, but my neighbors opposed it warmly. They stated to me, in glowing colors, the difficulties of the journey and settlement. My mind had dwelt on that subject; still I could not relinquish the enterprise. I viewed the evils of slavery at present as great, and apprehended more serious results in the future, if some effectual remedy should not be applied. Before setting out I met with a large assembly of my neighbors and acquaintances, and discoursed to them on Acts xx, 25. We reciprocated warm feelings and shed many

tears on the occasion. On the 11th of October, 1798, my brother-in-law, Rev. James Smith, my friend Ambrose Ranson, and myself, with our families, set out.

“ For fertile field and pleasant plains,
Where liberty and freedom reigns,
We left our native land.
O'er rivers deep, and mountains high,
Far to the west we bent our way,
And left our friends behind.”

The following is an account of the outfit of the company as given by one of them: The train consisted of three wagons, two of them drawn by four horses each, and one by five; a stage drawn by four horses, and a lighter carriage by two; three horses were used for the saddle. The company consisted of thirty-six persons, white and colored. At sunset the procession halted, when a scene novel to most of the company was exhibited. Tents were pitched, fires struck, cooking operations commenced, horses hopped, etc.; all was life and good feeling. The bustle over, the company was assembled for family prayer. Darkness spread out its curtain, and all were soon locked up in the silence of repose. The letter continues: The way was truly a difficult and dangerous one. Many gloomy valleys, rugged mountains, and deep and rapid streams, were

crossed in our journey. Little labor had been bestowed on the road. We had frequently to use ropes to save our carriages from being dashed to pieces by the frightful precipices and jutting rocks which obstructed our path. In descending the Ohio, the boat which contained our wives, most of our children, and a considerable part of our goods struck a rock and loosened a plank in the bottom of the boat at about the center of it, which caused the boat to settle on the rock, which saved the lives of those who were in it. From this Providential circumstance all was saved, and but little injury was done.

When we reached the Kanawha we could only procure two small boats; but as the water was very low, this was, perhaps, a fortunate circumstance. We placed on board of these boats as much of our property as we could and the females of our party, and the rest traveled by land till we arrived at Pt. Pleasant, on the Ohio. Here a great battle was once fought by our people and the Indians. What desolation war makes in the earth! Whence comes wars and fightings among us? St. James tells us, and also that there is nothing got by them. The Lord often makes use of one wicked nation to scourge another, and then scourges them for their cruelty. The Scripture exhorts us to fol

low after peace and holiness with all men, without which we can not see the Lord.

At Pt. Pleasant we expected to furnish ourselves with another boat, but there was none for sale. In the evening two men came down with a boat having some store-goods on board. We procured the boat from them, and agreed to deliver the store-goods at Limestone. This accommodated our company, except those required to travel by land with the horses. That God whose eye is over the little sparrows was over us, and his ears were open to our prayers. O, for purity of heart to taste and see that the Lord is good! I traveled by land, and passed through Chillicothe and Williamsburg. I found that degree of humanity in old Mr. Kain, who resided in Williamsburg, that ever after attached me to him. He kept a house of entertainment, such as one generally finds in a new country. He had a kind heart, but was wicked; but years afterward, at the close of life, I was with him, wept over him, and prayed for him; and in the dying hour there was some manifestation of grace in his heart.

From Williamsburg we passed on to Newtown, and for some days pitched our tents in Turpen's bottom, and then, with those who were with me, were accommodated with a small shop used by a mechanic. On Sunday

morning after our arrival the boats landed. My heart was dissolved into love and gratitude to God for his care over us on our journey, and bringing us safely into this desirable and distant land. I rented a house in Newtown, and we were treated kindly by the people, though they cared little for religion. The land which I had taken in exchange for my farm in Virginia, did not answer for a settlement, so I purchased a tract in the forks of the Little Miami river.

Near this place brother Francis M'Cormick, a Methodist preacher from Virginia, had settled and collected a society. This, and other considerations, induced me to settle where I did. I preached at Newtown, and at two places on the west of the Miami river. Our congregations were small, as the people were thinly settled in the neighborhood. About the middle of February we had our cabin finished, and moved into it. It is good to cast our care on God, who does not fail to care for us. I see this, and feel it, too. O for a thankful heart! We were now in the woods, had our land to clear to raise a crop of corn for our support, but the Lord was with us, and brought us on in a way so as to make his hand visible. We had corn, potatoes, turnips, cotton, and the like, so as to supply our wants, and spare some to oth-

ers. The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof, and blessed are they that inherit it.

Our meetings were small, but the Lord took care of us and led us gently on. John Kobler had come from Virginia to travel and preach in this newly-settled country. His labors were hard, and his difficulties great; but he sowed the good seed of the kingdom in different places. It encouraged the few Methodists that were scattered abroad in this new country. He left us, and in the month of June Lewis Hunt came to labor with us. He traveled extensively, labored much, and his usefulness appeared in some places, but his constitution failed, and he returned to Kentucky, and afterward died in peace.

The labors of John Kobler and Mr. Hunt are shown by the extent of their circuit. It included the Miami country, as far as Dayton, if I mistake not. At that time the roads were so deep in bad weather as to limit a day's journey frequently to twenty-five miles. One of the preaching-places established by Mr. Kobler was at Capt. Davis's, on Clear creek, Warren county, within less than half a mile of where the writer of this then lived. He was then a small boy of some twelve or thirteen years of age. I frequently heard him, and shall never forget his appearance and manner. My curi-

osity to hear him was excited by the account given of him by the son of Capt. Davis, who was a few years older than I was. He represented Mr. Kobler to be a most singular man. His time was almost wholly taken up, as represented by young Davis, in reading and praying; that although he was kind in his manner, and sociable, yet a smile was seldom seen on his face, but he was often seen to weep. I heard him often, and was always impressed much with his discourse, and especially with his prayers. He was tall and well proportioned; his hair was black, and he wore it long, extending over the cape of his coat. His dress was neat, with a straight-breasted coat, and in every respect as became a Methodist preacher of that day. He had a most impressive countenance. It showed no ordinary intellectual development, united with sweetness of disposition, unconquerable firmness, and uncommon devotion.

His preaching never failed to attract the deep attention of every hearer. Congregations were then small. The preaching-house at Captain Davis's, was a cabin occupied by the family, having two rooms. His manner was very deliberate at the commencement of his discourse, but as he progressed he became more animated, and his words more powerful. He

awakened in himself and in his Christian audience a sublimated feeling in the contemplation of heaven, and, in those who had a foreboding of future ill, unspeakable horrors. On these topics he was eloquent. Indeed, his mind was well stored with information, and in every point of view he was a most useful and an excellent preacher. His aims were more at the heart than the head. The Methodist preachers of that day believed if the heart were made right, it would influence the life and conduct of the individual. Mr. Hunt, who succeeded Mr. Kobler, was a zealous and good man, and a respectable preacher, but was not as able as Kobler.

Mr. Gatch says: Henry Smith also visited us, and labored in the Gospel. His station was on the Scioto. After these two preachers left us, we were without a traveling preacher for a considerable time. About this time brother James Smith died, and left a widow and nine children in an unsettled state, but the Lord took care of them. It was a time of trial to us, but the Lord ruleth, and submission is our duty. In our little society we had a revival of religion. My third daughter was converted, and several others in the neighborhood. While we were without circuit preaching, we continued to exercise ourselves in matters of religion to the

best advantage. The family of the Hills had moved to this country, and they were a praying people. Brother Ward, and also brother Whitaker, who afterward became a preacher, and others who were steady members, came to the country and settled among us. We kept up meetings similar to our quarterly meetings. Samuel Hill was at one of our meetings, and preached both days. One of the meetings was held at brother Ward's, and the Lord made it a great time with us. Some of the congregation were affected in an extraordinary manner. A great revival took place in our settlement, and a considerable number were converted, and our little Church rejoiced in the God of our salvation. My eldest daughter was married to James Garland, who had been reared under religious parents. He in early life had been favored with religious impressions, and in this revival he was under deep concern on account of his soul. One Sabbath afternoon the people met at my house, and engaged in a prayer meeting. It was concluded, but brother M'Cormick and some others coming in, they engaged in prayer and in singing, during which the Lord manifested his presence in a very extraordinary manner. A portentous cloud covered the heavens, and thunder, rain, and wind hightened the scene, but did not stop the exercises of the

meeting. I had preached in the day, and was weak in body, but my feelings were not raised to equal many in the meeting. I am at a loss to describe the exercises of the people on that occasion. It seemed as if the end of the world was at hand, and the people were on their way to heaven. I felt no objection to this till I thought of my son who was under conviction, and by affliction was confined to his bed. I began to pray for him, and, turning round, J. Garland was by me under great distress of soul. I spoke to him, and the Lord set his soul at liberty. This increased the divine flame. The meeting eventually closed, and the people set out for their homes; but the obstructions occasioned by the storm by swelling the streams, and by the fallen trees, were such that their progress was rendered difficult.

This revival continued for a considerable length of time. Three more of my children obtained religion, and several others, while it continued.

A new county, called Clermont, was established by the Legislature, and I was appointed a justice of the peace without my knowledge. I did not think myself qualified to discharge the duties of the office, and desired brother Ranson or brother M'Cormick to take my place, but they declined to do so. I felt it to be a

great cross, but in the discharge of the office I did as well as I could. A part of the business was in relation to estrays, and issuing certificates for wolf-scalps, but weightier matters belonged to the office. A magistrate was not only required to hold neighborhood courts, but, in connection with other magistrates, county courts also. This may appear like wearing a linsey-woolsey garment. Once I had none of the cares of the world upon me while a traveling preacher; when I failed, by reason of ill-health, to serve a circuit, I married, and then I had the cares of a family. I have always found that I am not my own, but am bought with a price, and that in whatsoever state I am it is my duty to glorify God in my body and spirit, which are his.

While we were without circuit preaching, brother Lakin visited us at the forks of the Little Miami, and collected and preached to our little flock on Saturday and Sunday. I suppose he found us better than he expected, as he found we had religion, health, and something to wear and eat. Many of the Kentuckians looked upon us as in a deplorable condition at this time. I was not at home, but in Kentucky, on a visit to my brothers, and had an opportunity of hearing of their views respecting us. Some supposed we would be poisoned with the waters

of the Little Miami. The Ohio separated between us and them, and they had strong prejudices against us. The second night on our journey, when I and my brother stopped at a house to lodge, we found strong feelings against the settlement north of the Ohio. When the husband came in his wife introduced us as one coming from Baltimore, the other from the territory. He replied that he could not help that. At supper I asked a blessing, which attracted the attention of the company, and the inquiry was made whether I was not a Presbyterian. I told them that I was a Methodist preacher. We then had a long talk on religion, which I recommended to their serious consideration. The next evening we met with brother Parker, who informed me where brother Hunt was, pointing to the house. I visited him, and our sensibilities were greatly excited, as I loved him much. The time of his departure was near at hand. His work was done. He had given to our circuit the last of his labors. The Lord was present with us. We wept and prayed together. He was sinking rapidly under a pulmonary disease. Brother Parker was among the most useful and eminent preachers among the Methodist preachers west of the mountains.

On our journey the next day we met with a

man, who inquired of us in relation to the camp meeting at Cane Ridge, and he seemed to be much alarmed at what had taken place there. I endeavored to moderate his feelings, telling him that the reports had probably exaggerated the facts stated. He denied this, and said some of his people were among them. Then I had to take the subject up from the beginning, and explained the matter to him. At the Cane Ridge camp meeting commenced one of the greatest revivals of religion that ever took place in Kentucky. It originated chiefly with the Presbyterians and Methodists.

We continued our journey, crossing Salt river, where I met with a man with whom I became acquainted on the Frederick circuit. He had backslidden, but his children were joining the Baptists. He invited me to preach in the Baptist meeting-house, but I informed him that I did not expect to preach more than one sermon, and I wished to preach that at my brother's. When we arrived at my brother's he did not know us till, like Joseph, I made myself known to him, as I could forbear no longer. On Sunday I preached at the Baptist church, my old acquaintance from Frederick and his family being present. On request I preached a second time on the same day and once on the next day. On Monday, after preaching, I

went to dine with my brother's daughter, and the people collected there, and I had to preach again. The next day I held a prayer meeting in the afternoon at my brother's. A deep and an earnest feeling seemed to be excited among the people, and no doubt good was done.

"The conference did not appoint a preacher to Miami circuit in 1800. There were at the time four or five local preachers in the Miami country, and they went every-where preaching the word. They systematized their operations, preached not only on Sabbath, but also on other days, held two days' meetings, and kept up a routine of quarterly meetings. They were much encouraged in seeing the pleasure of the Lord prosper in their hands. Those popular meetings took place at different points, but most of them were held in the forks of the Miami; and it was matter of astonishment to see the numbers that attended; women would walk twenty and even thirty miles to attend them. The whole care devolved on three families; each would have frequently to provide for from fifty to a hundred people. The men at night quartered in barns and out-buildings, while the women lodged in the cabins.

"Some time in the course of 1801, while destitute of itinerant ministers, the first distinguished revival commenced as follows: Philip

Gatch had preached on the afternoon of the Sabbath and dismissed the congregation, and stepping into another apartment of his cabin he saw a colored boy that he had raised leaning his head against the wall weeping. He spoke to him, and the boy immediately fell to the floor crying aloud for mercy. The congregation that were still in hearing returned to see what was the matter, and as they entered the house the power of God fell upon them. The professors, who were conscious that they had lost, in a measure, the enjoyments of religion, in the anxieties, and cares, and privations of their new homes, began to struggle for a renewal of their spiritual strength, calling on their classmates to help them, while one sinner after another was struck to the floor and constrained to cry aloud for mercy. The meeting lasted till a late hour at night. Several of the members were greatly blessed, and four or five were converted; among them was the third daughter of Mr. Gatch. Religion now began to show itself in earnest prayer meetings, which were frequently held in different cabins through the settlement. It was seldom the case where these meetings were held that one or more was not made to experience religion.

“Those, however, who were thus engaged were not permitted to worship God without

molestation. The exercises were such as had not before been witnessed, and this excited the opposition of members of other Churches as well as of the wicked. A strong opposition to Methodism, on account of what was called disorderly exercises, was manifested; but the persecution seemed only to increase the zeal of the members, and tended to the furtherance of the cause. It was a striking scene to witness the breaking up of one of the night meetings. The people, though coming from a distance, had no way of returning in the darkness but by dim paths or traces, some of which had been first formed by the tread of wild beasts. To obviate this difficulty they would procure fagots made of bark from the trees, or splinters made fine and rendered highly combustible; these would be fired up on starting home, and in every direction they might be seen like so many meteors, bounding amid the thick forest, and gilding the foliage of the loftiest trees, while the air would often be made vocal with their songs of rejoicing and praise. This revival spread generally over the country where such meetings were established and classes formed.

“ Such was the state of the work when, some time in 1802, Elisha W. Bowman was sent to the circuit. He was a beardless youth; and on

his first appearance those who felt and bore the responsibilities of the cause, were much disengaged; but what he lacked in ministerial experience was, in a measure, supplied by his fortitude and zeal, so that he was rendered useful in carrying on the revival, which at that time overspread the country. The following letter from Bishop M'Kendree, then the presiding elder of the district, to Bishop Asbury, gives an interesting account of the work. He says: 'My spring visit ended at our old friend's, Philip Gatch's, Little Miami, on the third Sunday in June. Our congregations were generally large. In places where formerly fifty persons made a respectable congregation, a thousand is now a tolerable gathering. People came from far to the Miami meeting. I heard of women that walked thirty miles to it, so that our congregation was very large for that new country. On the first day we were favored with the presence of the Lord in a singular manner; and I think I may safely say it increased throughout the meeting. On Sunday two young women of genteel appearance fell not far from the stand, but were presently taken off by their brothers, as I was informed. The Spirit of the Lord, like a sword, pierced one of the brothers about ten steps from the stand, and he suddenly fell to the earth, together with his

weeping charge, and cried aloud for mercy. The other was graciously visited in like manner. Thus these four, instead of two, were deeply engaged. This attracted the attention of many, so that there were many converted through their means; and I am informed they never rested till they found peace, by which means religion was carried into other parts, and the work of God continued to spread.

“The last thing respecting this meeting that I shall mention, is a case of natural simplicity, which deeply affected my mind. An old woman sitting just behind me, while brother Smith was speaking, began in a low and mournful manner, and expressed herself to the following purport: “Lord, I have heard about this people, and walked a long way to hear them. Yesterday, while the man was speaking, I felt very bad, and thought I should fall down; but, Lord, I was ashamed that the people should see me cry and fall down, so I was about to get into the woods and hide myself, for I did not know it was the Lord. But I could not walk; I fell down among all the people, and all my shame went away, and now I am happy. Bless the Lord, he has converted my soul! O how light my soul is now! Glory, glory to King Jesus! But, O Lord, my husband is wicked, my children are wicked, and they must be con-

verted; and there is no religion in the neighborhood—no one to tell them how to get converted. Lord, send some of these preachers that have the Spirit of God in their hearts into our neighborhood, to my house, to tell the people the way to heaven.” He adds: ‘This prayer so affected me, that at that time I felt willing to preach the Gospel to the poor in every corner of the earth.’”

Mr. Gatch observes: This beautiful land has been a hidden space to civilization for many ages. There are traces in many parts of ancient fortifications, and other works, which could not have been made by the Indians, but by a people much farther advanced in civilization than they now are. The growths of timber upon these works, consisting of mounds and elevated embankments, seem to be the same as on the ground generally, which shows their great antiquity. What people or race constructed these works is not now known, and probably never will be. Some think these formations were before the flood, but this notion, it appears to me, is refuted, by timbers being found in the earth at a great depth. I saw timber that was found on digging a well on high land; also, by salt-water shells being found in high places. Nature is a grand laboratory, and it is ever in progress; im-

perceptible it may be to the eye, but its doings are marked by centuries. The process of change in the natural world is ever in progress.

The evidences of the flood are more or less apparent to every Christian observer in all lands. The fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened, and the waters covered the highest hills and mountains. The whole earth was covered. When the waters subsided, the ark rested upon the mountains of Ararat, and not on Mount Ararat. The country was called Ararat. I doubt whether the spot can be fixed where the ark rested, or what length of time transpired before the building of the tower of Babel was commenced. The inhabitants journeyed from the east till they found a plain in the land Shinar, and there they dwelt. But they undertook to build a city and a tower whose top would reach to heaven, saying, "Let us make us a name, lest we be scattered abroad on the face of the whole earth." But the Lord confounded their language, and scattered them abroad. It is the work of God to pluck up nations and transplant them. He can make the inhabited places waste, and the wilderness a fruitful field. The earth was divided by the order of God; the confusion of different languages, which was sent by the Almighty at the tower of Babel, necessarily scat-

tered the people, and formed distinct communities as their language was understood. What has happened aforetime may happen again. The appearances in this country show that nations were planted here who have disappeared. This should teach us the obligations we are under to fear the Lord and obey the Gospel. Our lot is cast in a goodly land. We have the Gospel, and abound in the rich mercies of heaven. The Lord has set a wall about us, so that slavery can not exist in our borders. I do not know what more he could do for his vineyard than what he has done. We must take care of the vine of Sodom; it produces grapes like unto Gaul. The sin of Sodom is said to have been pride, fullness of bread, and idleness. Ezekiel xvi, 49. The Sodomites in a rich land, something like the garden of the Lord. Genesis xiii, 10. But they became very wicked, and God destroyed them with fire and brimstone. And if we do not improve our mercies, spiritual and temporal, it will be more tolerable for Sodom and Gomorrah in the day of judgment than for us.

Again: let us see in the children of Israel how the Lord took them from under the Egyptian yoke, and planted them in a land flowing with milk and honey. They were organized into a Church, and furnished with all neces-

sary instruction, in order to their present and future welfare. But they forsook the Lord, and served other gods, and the Lord poured out his wrath upon them, and scattered them among the nations of the earth. We see what desolation came upon the seven Churches of Asia. They regarded not God's mercies nor his threatenings. The Ottoman yoke is laid upon their necks, and they have been sorely oppressed for many centuries.

If we wish ourselves and our posterity to enjoy the mercies of God, we must avoid the evils which have overthrown other nations. Pride was a leading trait in the character of the people of Sodom, and is it not found to prevail in our country? The children of Israel sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play. Here is idleness, and from this arises wantonness and evils innumerable. Let parents fear God and work righteousness; let them have the love of God shed abroad in their hearts by the Holy Ghost, and this will qualify them to bring up their children in the will and ways of God. Abraham, the friend of God, thus conducted himself, and after his death God blessed Isaac. Children generally take after their parents. This Stephen testified when they were stoning him to death: "Ye stiff-necked and uncircumcised in heart and ears, ye do always

resist the Holy Ghost; as your fathers did, so do ye." Acts vii, 51.

It is seen and known among the Methodists, that the Lord works on the minds of children by his Spirit when very young. He does illuminate and quicken their souls, and they who doubt this oppose the grace of God, and make it of but little effect. "Remember thy Creator in the days of thy youth; bring up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old he will not depart from it." It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth, and our Lord tells us first to seek the kingdom of God and his righteousness. Children seldom obey their parents in all things if their parents do not obey God. The promises of God were rich and many to the children of Israel, consequent on their obedience to him. He enjoins nothing on us but what is for our good; but if we disregard his commandments awful curses are threatened. Israel disobeyed, and the threatening denounced against them came upon them. Let us take warning, and conclude with Joshua, as for us and our household we will serve the Lord.

God's particular providence is shown in the order of particular things. Does not this appear in the case of Noah and the world of the ungodly? in the case of Joshua, who com-

manded the sun and moon to stand still? And God, for the good of the children of Israel, permitted it to be so. The salvation of Lot and the destruction of the people of Sodom; the destruction of the nations before the children of Israel, all show the special providence of God. And this applies not only to nations but to families and individuals. See Abraham's, Isaac's, and Jacob's families; Joseph, Job, Shadrach, Meshech, and Abednego, and Daniel. There are other instances too numerous to be mentioned. It is not with God as many suppose; he changes not, yet he extends his power or withdraws it in his wisdom and righteousness; also his mercy, justice, love, and knowledge. All his attributes are in unity, and never clash. They are all combined together for the good and just government of all nations and individuals. He raises up men out of the dust, both in Church and state, who excited the wonder of the world—David, the smallest of his father's sons, Washington, and many others. All the colleges and academies on earth can not make such men. See the numbers of Methodist preachers that the Lord has raised up in our day, and sent them forth, holding up a crucified Savior on the pole of a preached Gospel. Some call them weak men, but God makes the mighty to tremble

under the word of his grace. Behold what God has done by them in the United States in little more than half a century! And still greater things will God do by them if they are faithful; but if they break asunder, and bite and devour one another, they will fail.

I was once young, but now am old, and I have never seen any who left Methodists prosper; if for a while, yet they dwindled away, and are as nothing. To be a Methodist preacher is to live a life of labor, whether local or traveling. Those who travel circuits are exposed to all sorts of weather, different diet, and lodging; besides preaching they attend to the societies and other arduous duties. The local preachers, too, have to labor, like other men, six days in the week, and on the Sabbath have to preach, which exhausts their physical power more than labor; but their reward is with the Lord.

This brings down the journal of Mr. Gatch to 1802. He continues: Congress granted to the North-western territory the right to form a constitution and state government on certain principles. James Sargent and myself were elected to represent Clermont county. To this I was agreed, as I considered much depended on the constitution that might be formed. We met on the first Monday in November, and

adjourned the twenty-ninth. In general unanimity prevailed among the members of the convention; not a vote was given contrary to the ordinance of Congress. I believe Providence presided over us at that time, and the constitution formed was approved of by some of the distinguished men of other states. It was not a perfect instrument, and no doubt is susceptible of improvement; but it might have been worse. Solomon says, "He is a fool that trusteth his own heart." The Legislature met the next spring. I was solicited to offer as a candidate; but I wished to remain free from those things, and I requested one of our representatives not to suffer my name to be used as a candidate for Associate Judge. The members from our county formed a ticket which did not include my name, and the members of the Legislature refused to vote their ticket unless they would include my name. I was elected, to my surprise; but, on reflection, I concluded that it might be wrong if, under the circumstances, I should refuse to serve. The men associated with me on the bench were men of whom I approved. Some suppose that religious men ought not to serve in civil offices; but why not? Is it for fear they may be led astray by bad men? Let a man who professes religion be uniform in his conduct and exemplary,

and no one will interrupt him to his hurt. This I know; but let a man who pretends to religion contradict it in his conduct, and he will be set at naught by all. Hypocrites and back-sliders are but little esteemed in public or private life. The world is so enlightened that they know how a professor of religion should live. I have been on the bench twenty years, and, by the grace of God, have left it with a clear conscience.

Brother John Sale came to travel on this circuit. He was a persevering man, and useful in his labors. The Lord favored us with a revival of religion, though it had been on the increase for some years. Brother Benjamin Lakin after this traveled the circuit, and brother Sale presided. We had a very gracious camp meeting. The labors of these two preachers greatly tended to the spread of Methodism, and the establishment of it in the Miami country. We have been favored with the labors of some respectable preachers. Mr. Asbury visited us several times. Mr. Whatcoat was once with him. They now cease from their labors, and their works follow them. Methodism, under God, is greatly indebted to these two men, who came across the Atlantic to labor, live, and die with us.

The first circuit that was formed here

extended over a tract of country from the Ohio, up the Miami rivers, to Mad river, and the labors of the preachers who traveled it were great. Now there are seven circuits within the bounds of the first one. The settlements are filling up and other circuits will soon be formed. Our preachers, who love souls, are ready to preach the Gospel to every creature, trusting the Lord for their bread and water, which to them God has made sure. Our state is still in its infancy; the population is great and rapidly increasing; and I have no doubt of the increase of Methodism if the Church continues faithful. Where is the settlement in which the standard of Methodism has not been erected? It is a privilege of Methodists—and what is a privilege is a duty—to seek more of the life of God in their souls. Does God prosper us? Hitherto he has. Why, then, take ourselves from under the shadow of his wing? If we forsake him, we hew out to ourselves broken cisterns which will hold no water; and if we lose the consolations of God out of our souls, like our mother Eve, we shall take up the forbidden fruit. Nothing is so desirable to us as happiness, but nothing can make us happy but the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. This has been the life of Methodism from the beginning down to the present

REV. PHILIP GATCH.

time. We ought always to keep in memory that our sufficiency is of God, and that the kingdom of God is not in word, but in power. It is also righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

After I had made up my mind to remove to the North-western territory, I felt a desire for God to spare our lives till we got there. I wished that myself, and wife, and eight children, should close our earthly career in that desirable land, and that our bodies should rest there till the morning of the resurrection. We arrived in safety; and the second year my brother James Smith died. Here it may not be improper to introduce the remarks of the Mr. Conduce Gatch, as to the death of Mr. Smith and his funeral. He says: My uncle James Smith was attacked with the bilious fever, and, after an illness of ten or fifteen days, died. His remains were conveyed to the burying-ground on my father's farm, and was the third or fourth person deposited in that now extensive burying-ground. His remains had to be removed from Middletown, below Newtown, some nine or ten miles, and they did not arrive till after dark. It was the most solemn and impressive interment I ever witnessed.

To behold a small, feeble widow, reclining on my father's arm, followed or surrounded by nine children, the youngest then at the breast—

Judge Smith, of Lebanon—she far from the land of her nativity and the most of her relations and friends, witnessing the deposit of the remains of one who had been her comforter and help through many scenes of trial and affliction, made a deep and mournful impression on all present. Three preachers were present, but they were so overcome and affected with the occasion, that not one of them was able to say any thing at the grave, though solicited to do so. Mr. Smith had formerly belonged to the Methodist Episcopal Church, when O'Kelly, a popular and talented presiding elder, left the Church, and Mr. Smith and a number of others left with him. They were known as the Republican Methodists.

On our arrival in this country, my mother—his sister—asked him if he felt as though he could unite again with the Methodist Episcopal Church. He replied that he could. He was a respectable preacher, and highly esteemed by his acquaintances. He was a good writer, and occasionally he indulged in writing poetry. His widow moved, agreeably to a previous arrangement, to the land near Waynesville, purchased by Mr. Smith in his lifetime. Mrs. Smith, under her severe affliction, was wonderfully sustained. She found that the widows' and orphans' God, as promised, was their God.

Her family were raised with much respectability. She lived to see her children settled, and at a good old age died in peace.

Mr. Gatch continues: The next death in the family after Mr. Smith, was my son-in-law; and on the 12th day of July, 1811, my wife died, who for many years had enjoyed the comforts of religion. She was not only a nursing mother in her family, but in the Church of God. She was very attentive to the souls of our children. "The reader will not fail to pause on this account of the death of his wife, by this venerable man. It is a simple, and appropriate, and beautiful eulogy. It is short, but most comprehensive. It describes a perfect character in very few words. What more could be added that would not weaken the description?"

It is observed, "This providence was severely felt. She was a faithful helpmate to him in all the situations connected with his eventful life. When after their marriage Mr. Gatch was from home for weeks, on his ministerial excursions, she would assume the whole charge of the home interests. Frequently engaged in the out of door service, under the rigor of winter, she would return to her house with her clothes stiff frozen upon her. The difficulties and trials of the wives of Methodist

preachers in those days, bore a full proportion to those of their companions. But she encountered them with a cheerfulness that caused Mr. Gatch to be ever ready to perform his duty. Indeed, when the condition of things at home would seem to impose a difficulty in his way, she would urge him onward, reminding him that while in the discharge of duty God would take care of them."

"When her husband determined to remove to the North-western territory, though she was not insensible of the hardships and sufferings that must be encountered in the removal, from which most women would have shrunk, she yielded her assent willingly, hoping that it might render Mr. Gatch more useful, by assisting to spread religion in a new country. She also believed it would be better for their posterity. And when they arrived at their new home, though deprived of the comforts, and often straitened for the necessaries of life, she, with her husband, was always ready to welcome the stranger to the hospitalities of their cabin. She was a center around which the destitute of the neighborhood revolved. No one approached under the pressure of want, whose heart was not cheered with her benignant nature. She gave liberally of what she possessed. In contributing to the comfort of preachers her

efforts were untiring. On becoming attached to the Church, with most of the family, in 1772, her father's house became a home for the preachers that first visited Virginia. The conference of 1780 was held at his house. And after her marriage her house was still a retreat to the weary itinerant, who was not only refreshed at the temporal board, but also in spirit, and strengthened to go forward in the performance of duty."

"Mrs. Gatch was well instructed in the Scriptures, and in the doctrines of the Church, and could with readiness communicate to others the treasures of religious knowledge. When Mr. Gatch's engagements were such that he could not attend to the desire of the young minister who was seeking to become better informed in matters of religion, he would refer him to Mrs. Gatch, saying that she was the best preacher's nurse. On his removal to the west, Mr. Gatch's house was still the home of the preachers, and was also a regular preaching-place. In a coming day it will not be said to her, 'Inasmuch as you have not done these things to my disciples, ye have not done it to me.'

"In the early history of Methodism, the quarterly meetings generally were held at the house of Mr. Gatch. On these occasions Mrs. Gatch would provide for the entertainment of from

fifty to a hundred persons. This service she performed cheerfully as unto the Lord, knowing that the tendency of those meetings was to diffuse religion more extensively through the country. She felt a deep regret on leaving her native country, that she might never again see those preachers with whom she had been so long acquainted, and who were as a part of her own family. She had expressed those feelings to Bishop Whatcoat. He replied, with a smile, 'You must not be surprised if you see me riding up to your door, after you shall have become settled in the territory.' The joy she felt to see Bishops Whatcoat and Asbury ride up to her door in 1805, was inexpressible, and was reciprocated by her venerable guests. After the death of Mrs. Gatch, Bishop Asbury visited the family but once, and he remarked to a female friend whom he had prevailed on to accompany him, that to him it was like losing an own sister, on visiting the house and not seeing her; he felt the same loneliness and sorrow.

"Bishop Asbury had for his traveling companion Rev. J. Crofford. The party spent several days with Mr. Gatch. An appointment was circulated for the Sabbath, to the distance of ten or twelve miles. A spacious awning was spread out in front of Mr. Gatch's dwelling, which, together with two apartments in the

cabin, accommodated a congregation of a large size for that day. After the two bishops and Mr. Crofford had preached, Bishop Asbury insisted that Mr. Gatch should preach also, which made four sermons in succession. So precious was the word of the Lord in those days that the congregation evinced no uneasiness, but paid the greatest attention to all the discourses."

Mr. Gatch continues: Next our second daughter died. She was very young when she first felt the Spirit of God in its divine influence. Next we followed a daughter-in-law to the grave. These died in the faith of the Son of God. I have seen five of my grandchildren buried, and four of my great-grandchildren. I esteem this a treasure in heaven. My father and mother, one brother, and two sisters died in Baltimore, who, I have reason to believe, have gone to rest. I have many friends and acquaintances in heaven, who are looking out for my arrival. I often view them in my meditations, and hope to enjoy their society to all eternity. I pray God to make me faithful till death.

My two youngest sons were brought into the fold of God under the ministry of Burris Westlake. My youngest son, George, has been engaged in the traveling connection for several

years. May God make him faithful and useful, and I hope he will continue in the work as long as he is able to discharge the duties of a circuit preacher! I am now in the seventy-seventh year of my age, and am, I believe, the oldest preacher that belongs to the Methodist connection in America. I have been with the Methodists fifty-five years. I have seen their rise and progress. After I ceased to travel I attended conference for a number of years. Mr. Asbury and the elder preachers treated me with brotherly love. I once was a class-leader, and at times exhorted; then a public exhorter, a local preacher, also a traveling preacher, and when my constitution failed I fell into the local body again. When I look back I have no fault to find with their doctrine or discipline; the greatest fault I have to find is with myself. We ought to be careful lest we find fault where there is none, and so disquiet our own feelings. Several of my grandchildren make a profession of religion. When my son-in-law, James Garland, died, he left four small boys, and they all have been brought to experience religion. The three youngest got converted first. In their religious exercises, in the day-time, they were often in the orchard. One night they were in one room of the house singing and praying. The eldest one came and leaned against the

post of the door. Their bowels yearned over him, and they began to pray for him, "Lord, send down power; let it come!" He soon cried out, "It has come!" and he fell on the floor, where the Lord converted his soul. The eye of faith reaches the Lord, and brings down the help that we need.

"To as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God." This I call faith, and with this power we are enabled to believe with the heart unto righteousness. At the request of some of my friends I have been gathering up some of the fragments that remain, after thousands have been fed with the bread of life, and with that meat that perishes not, in hopes that they may not all be lost. I am now an old man, and the time of my departure is near at hand. I have seen six generations of my family—my grandfather, and so down to my great-grandchildren. I leave this to my family a legacy when I am gone from them, and to all who may think it worthy of their attention. I do not suppose it will suit the refined taste of all my acquaintances. I see a great change in the human family since I was a boy. When I look round, and think of my former acquaintances, and see that they have gone to their account; I am ready to say, My company is gone, and I am left alone; but

with the help of God I will wrestle till the break of day. 10th of May, 1827.

“Mr. Gatch lived several years after the close of this manuscript. His life continued to be what it had been. He was always engaged in doing good to the souls and bodies of men. An account of a sermon preached by him is given in a letter from Judge Fishback, of Clermont county, dated at Batavia, 1853. He says: ‘My first acquaintance with Philip Gatch commenced in the fall of 1815. He then held the office of Associate Judge of Clermont county, and continued to occupy a seat on the bench for many years afterward. In this position he never failed to evince his strong sense of right and wrong.

“In your letter, [Rev. G. Gatch’s,] you are pleased to allude to your father as my old friend, and that my partiality for him was fully reciprocated by his tokens of kindness for me. He made the impression on me, at least, that he cared for my welfare. Why I should have been the subject of his special attention I can give no reason, except that he knew me in my youth, in my untutored wildness. When I was a stranger, and friendless, he saw and knew all about me. His enlarged desires for the extension of human happiness never suffered a depression. He often rebuked me for my errors

and indiscretions, for which I esteemed him the more.

“The most essential matter, however, to which you have requested my attention particularly, is the sermon preached by him at the camp meeting held near the east fork of the Little Miami river, in this county, three or four miles from Milford.

“The sermon to which you allude was delivered on Sabbath morning, I think, in the month of August. The notice was given to those at the encampment to prepare for early service, and that father Gatch would preach at half-past seven o'clock. The suggestion was at once well received by the whole audience. There was a fitness in the occasion. Father Gatch was enfeebled by age, and was always without any great compass of voice. It was supposed, however, he might be well heard by an audience of from five to seven hundred persons; that number or more might have been in the encampment; but he could not preach in the open air to thousands. The early morning hour was to be occupied by him. The sound of the trumpet from the stand on that morning soon brought the audience to their seats. In a few moments there appeared the aged, venerable form of father Gatch, as all were accustomed to call him. The first impression I

received, before he uttered a word, was, that he did not belong to this generation. It was as the dead arising to speak to the living, and such seemed to be the impression produced upon the assembly. But he did preach to the people, and it was the last time I ever heard him in the pulpit. I do not remember to have heard of his ever preaching another sermon afterward. Indeed, the opinion then expressed was, that that would be his last sermon. His text was Heb. xii, 28, "Wherefore, we receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear."

"The subject of his discourse that morning is somewhat familiar to me. The kingdom of grace was the principal topic of discussion—the extent of that kingdom, its power, its almost resistless character. All efforts to stay its extension, or the enlargement of its borders, but multiplied and increased its power and dominion. It was a kingdom of peace; its Prince brought no oppression upon his subjects; it waged no war of ambition or strife, and all unholy desires were forbidden within its borders. Such were some of the leading points to which his remarks were directed. In conclusion he alluded to himself and his early emigration to the west. He named Francis M'Cormick

and Ambrose Ranson as two of his early associates in Ohio. He spoke of the tribulations through which they had passed, their sufferings and privations; but the great consolation he enjoyed in his log-cabin worship, was in knowing or having an abiding confidence that he was a subject of that powerful kingdom whose Prince cared for his subjects.

“I had often heard father Gatch before, and always regarded him as capable of much usefulness, and as affording a large amount of solid instruction. But on the occasion alluded to, although there were the whitened locks, the furrowed cheek, the wrinkled brow, the wreck of a trembling frame, under the weight of many years, yet that morning’s exercises seemed to impart to him newness of life and a vigor of effort unknown to him in my earlier acquaintance. The inquiry made during the remainder of the meeting was, “Did you hear father Gatch’s Sabbath morning service?””

“Another individual who was present and heard the same discourse, states, that before the sermon was closed the congregation were on their feet, and were drawn round the stand in a solid body; that saint and sinner were deeply affected, while the flow of tears was great. He continued, after the above sermon, still to preach to the congregation in the neighborhood,

and frequently talked to the children in Sabbath school. He preached his last sermon, it is believed, on the day he was eighty-four years of age."

"The quarterly conference of Milford circuit appointed a committee to report the facts in regard to the introduction of Methodism in that part of Ohio; and the committee, after applying to the best sources of information, made a report which must be interesting to the Church, as it shows that Methodism was first introduced into Ohio in the neighborhood of Milford.

"The committee say in their report: 'As the result of our investigation, we present you with the particulars, which we think, so far as they go, are as nearly a correct history as the means of information at the present time can furnish.

"In the spring or summer of 1797, Rev. Francis M'Cormick formed into a class the following members: Francis M'Cormick, and Rebecca, his wife; Philip Hill, and Elizabeth, his wife; Joseph Hill, and Rosa, his wife; Mr. Johnson, and Kesiah, his wife; Ezekiel Demmitt, and Phoebe, his wife; John Ramsey and wife, Barbara Malett, William Salter, Jeremiah Hall, Asel Hichcock, and Jane, his wife; Jane Easter, Esther Matton, and John Mitchell,

making in all twenty members. The Hills were from North Carolina; the others were principally from Kentucky, and had, while there, been members of the same class with Mr. McCormick, and were by him influenced to come to Ohio. This first organization were all included within the forks of the Little Miami, with the exception of two families, who settled on the south side of the east fork, but immediately on its bank. The members of the class were settled up each branch of the river, from their junction, about ten miles. The place of meeting was the house of Mr. McCormick, on the bank of the west fork, about three-quarters of a mile above Milford. From this Church thus constituted other Churches were planted, which extended Methodism throughout the southern part of Ohio.

“In the spring of 1798 there was an accession made to the class of the following persons: Grace Garland, Crecy Garland, Joseph Avy and wife, Jacob Teal, and Elizabeth, his wife. These came from the society in Kentucky to which Mr. McCormick had belonged. In the fall of the same year the class was increased by the arrival of the Rev. Philip Gatch, and Elizabeth, his wife, their daughters Precocia and Martha, and Ambrose Ranson, and Nancy, his wife. These additions increased the num-

ber of the class to thirty-two. Mr. Gatch had been a preacher about twenty-seven years.

“‘Mr. McCormick applied to the Church for aid, and John Kobler was sent, who, on the second of August, 1798, preached the first sermon in the territory by a regularly-constituted Methodist missionary. He administered the sacrament of the Lord’s supper at a regularly-appointed quarterly meeting at Mr. McCormick’s, held on the twenty-fourth and twenty-fifth days of December, 1798. This was the first time the Methodists had partaken of the sacrament in the territory,”” etc.

To show the manner of preaching by Mr. Gatch, the plan of two or three discourses are given. The text of the first one was John x, 9: “I am the door; by me if any man enter in he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture.” The heads only will be stated:

I. Explain the text. 1. A metaphor is employed to arrest the attention and impress the memory of those addressed. 2. He is properly in this sense called the door, because he opens to mankind all the blessings of this and a future life.

II. Its doctrines. 1. In this life convincing, convicting, justifying, sanctifying, and persevering grace. 2. In the world to come a par-

adisiacial and a completely-glorified state. 3. How we are to enter into those privileges by Christ, the door. It is through faith.

III. In what respect we are saved. 1. By convincing and convicting grace, we are saved from the love and practice of sin. 2. By justification we are saved from the guilt of sin. 3. By sanctification we are saved from the carnal mind or inbeing of sin. 4. By entering into a paradisiacial state we are saved from the evils of the present life. 5. By a glorified state we are saved from the corruption of the grave. 6. We shall go in and out and find pasture. (1.) This may refer to the various means of grace, religious duties, and, (2,) to the degrees in grace and happiness embraced in Christian experience.

The synopsis of a second discourse will be given, a little more in detail. Gal. vi, 14: "But God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world."

The cross of Christ was the favorite topic of St. Paul's contemplation. The cross of Christ was the choice subject of his sermons, and the grand theme in his writings. At all times, in every condition, he avowed, he gloried in the cross of Christ. Yea, what is very

remarkable, he gloried in nothing save in the cross of Christ. And it is still more remarkable, he disdained the idea of glorying in any thing beside. He spoke of such a practice as altogether repugnant to his feelings, accounting it a high degree of folly and wickedness. God forbid that I should glory, etc. It may, therefore, be an employment worthy of our attention at the present, to look into the nature, reasonableness, and wisdom of the resolution which the apostle had formed, all which I hope will appear if we consider, first, in what the apostle did not glory; and, secondly, in what he did glory; and, thirdly, what reason he had in glorying in the cross of Christ only.

I. In what the apostle did not glory. 1. He did not glory in his superior education or scholarship. 2. Nor in the strictness of his life as a Jew. 3. Nor in the superiority of his gifts. 4. Nor in the extensiveness and success of his labors as a minister of the Gospel.

II. In what he did glory: the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. The cross of Christ has an extended application in Scripture, and may be considered materially, metaphorically, and metonymically. The first alludes to that cross upon which he expired on Calvary. The second embraces the trials met with in the service of Christ: "If any man will be my disciple, let

him deny himself, take up his cross, and follow me;" that is, submit to afflictions, privations, etc. God often sanctifies the cross to the crucifixion of the hearts of his people to the world. The cross of Christ, taken in the third sense, implies the Gospel, its doctrines, privileges, and prospects, procured by the death of Him who died upon the cross. This is what the apostle gloried in.

III. Reason the apostle had for glorying in the cross of Christ. The cross of Christ literally was but a tree, yet being the cross of Christ, is infinitely ennobled. It becomes the tree of life; it bears divine fruit; its clusters are all spiritual and heavenly blessings. A few of these clusters you will permit me to select. May God make them a rich feast to every humble soul! The first is repentance; the second pardon, or reconciliation; the third holiness; the fourth victory in death; the fifth an entrance into glory, the soul at death, and the body at the judgment. Here the cross literally and metonymically are joined, and these embraced and preached take in the cross metaphorically, by which we are crucified to the world, and the world to us. No marvel that the apostle gloried only in the cross of Christ, since all who perseveringly bear it will, by it, be borne to glory.

Now to apply the subject; and, first, to brethren in the ministry. My brethren, if you can, as the apostle did, glory in the cross of Christ, you may have it. First, take it for your study as men; second, for your hope as Christians; and, thirdly, for your theme in its doctrines and duties as ministers. I inquire, do you use it as such? How may this be known?

Then follows an address to believers, the self-righteous, and the wicked, each in their respective relations to the subject.

Luke xv, 2, "This man receiveth sinners."

I. I shall show that all come under the character here alluded to.

II. That this man is authorized to receive such.

III. The condition upon which he will receive sinners.

IV. The blessings that accrue to those that are received by him.

Luke xvi, 23, "And in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torment."

I. The reasons why he went to hell. 1. He was thoughtless about eternity. 2. He abused the mercies of God. 3. He was uncharitable to the poor. 4. He died without repentance.

II. What are the torments of the damned? 1. They lose earth with all its pleasures. 2. They lose heaven with all its joys. 3. They

are tormented in all their powers; their understanding clear, their memory quick, their conscience stricken. 4. They have bad company. 5. The wrath of God falls upon them. 6. This condition to last forever.

“The following sketch has been furnished, and is inserted, as it is deemed to have some relation to the labors of Mr. Gatch:

“The local preachers have no part in the enactment of rules or government of the Church, but occupy a subordinate position in the ministry of the Methodist Church. They are more circumscribed in their sphere of operations than the itinerant, and less conspicuous in the discharge of their appropriate functions. If, however, we look into the history of Methodism, their labors and usefulness would appear to be greater than they are generally considered. Methodism was planted in America by local preachers. Their success induced itinerants to come from Europe and enter into their labors, while the local preachers penetrated further into the destitute settlements. Philip Embury commenced the work in New York, and formed a society, assisted by Captain Webb. Robert Strawbridge settled in Maryland, and began to cry, ‘Prepare ye the way of the Lord.’ Richard Owen, Nathan Perigo, and Sater Stephenson, through

his instrumentality, were brought to a knowledge of the truth, and joined successfully in the work of the ministry, enlarging their fields of labor in every direction, and forming classes at different places, while Robert Williams, in his visits to Virginia, sowed good seed, and organized societies. At the same time John King, his countryman, from England, was neither idle nor unsuccessful. Their movements might be considered irregular where an organized state of the Church existed; but those who first came as itinerants to America found a people made ready for their reception; and they found preachers ready to unite with them in their labors, who had grown up under the instruction and labor of the local brethren. William Watters, Philip Gatch, Freeborn Garrettson were the fruits of the local ministry.

“ ‘The local brethren continued to operate in destitute places, and moving with the tide of emigration they were the first to preach the Gospel in the west. Indeed, throughout this extensive country, local preachers have been active in every revival of religion, and in many instances were the instruments under God of many of the great revivals of religion with which the country has been blessed. Gatch and M’Cormick were the instruments of the revival in the forks of the Miami, the effects

of which, in a greater or less degree, were felt throughout the Miami country.

“The same may be said of local preachers in other parts of the country where Methodism has flourished. The conference held in North Carolina in 1785, for the southern division of the Church, reported an increase for the year of nine hundred and ninety-one members, while the conference consisted of about twenty traveling preachers; but according to Doctor Coke, one hundred and ten of these were in South Carolina, and were brought into the Church through the instrumentality of a local preacher who had recently settled in that state.

“The following sentiments, expressed by William Watters, may be found in a short account of his life, written by himself: “I have found by experience, that the traveling preacher has, in most particulars, the advantage in obtaining knowledge and of being useful, yet it is not so in all cases.” He says, “I never found myself better furnished with arguments for attacking and convincing sinners than while in a local situation.” He goes on: “In the purer ages of the Church it was by the Lord joined to a traveling ministry; and though they have been divided, yet this ought never to be the case. There should be the greatest attention in the government of every Church, so as to unite

and settle these two particular spheres of action in such a way as will aid in the great cause, and not to destroy each other. I know of no plan adopted by any of the reformed Chnrches, or any that could be adopted, to equal ours." These sentiments will express the views of this early friend of Mr. Gatch, who scrupulously watched all the movements of the Church, and strenuously opposed every innovation. He felt that he had an interest in that superstructure, in the erection of which he had bestowed his full share of labor and suffering. To the apportionment of duty and authority between the traveling and local departments, he gave his cordial assent.

"The effects of the system here demonstrated that the local department must remain an integral part in order to a continuation of that prosperity heretofore so remarkable, till the field of labor assigned to the traveling preacher shall become frittered down to a congregational form, and then Ichabod may be written upon its forehead. The great secret of a minister's usefulness, whether traveling or local, depends upon his conformity in life to the practice of the Gospel more than to any other circumstance. Talents can never supply a defect in this respect, and where talent is moderate this would go far to supply a want

of it. Where this indispensable quality is found, the more you expose the minister to public observation in the performance of any of the reasonable and necessary duties of domestic, social, or civil life, the more extensively will his light shine, and a salutary influence be exerted. Some men are so constitutionally formed as to be unfitted for an extensive sphere. Mr. Gatch possessed what, to some, might seem the rare qualification of carrying his religious character and influence into all the departments of active duty. And those who knew him best will find little difficulty in coming to the conclusion, that his course in life was as well calculated to advance the cause of religion as any he could have chosen."

"It will be recollected by the reader, that William Watters and Philip Gatch were the first Methodist native teachers in America, who entered into the traveling connection, and that they were members of the first conference that was held. It is presumed, therefore, that the letter which follows, from Mr. Watters to Mr. Gatch, will be read with some interest.

""FAIRFAX, Dec. 27, 1807.

""MY VERY DEAR BROTHER,—Grace, mercy, and peace be multiplied unto you from God our Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ! I received

your letter of the first of November two days past, and can hardly express to you how much I was gratified in hearing from my dear old friend. I bless and praise Almighty God for his superabundant mercy and love to you and your family. You say you have eight children; I have none. [Watters had no children.]

“The spreading of the Gospel in your state, under the Methodists, is to me pleasing news, and, I have no doubt, lifts up your head and comforts your heart under all your tribulations.

“Your remarks on the necessity and the effects of preaching and pressing on believers a present and full salvation from sin, I think are perfectly correct. And I have generally, for many years, found that in proportion to my own enjoyment of the mind which was in the blessed Jesus, I have held forth the great and precious promises of the Gospel to my brethren.

“I have very seldom heard from you, and did not know that you ever heard from me. I have often thought of writing to you a line, but opportunities have seldom offered, and when they did I have by one means or other let them slip.

“You request me to send you one of my little books, and I will gladly comply with it if

I can possibly get a conveyance. I should have been very glad of consulting you on a small part of it, if I had known how I could have done it. I mean that part that relates to our partial division about the ordinances. And if you meet with any thing that ought to be corrected, you will oblige me by making your remarks freely and fully the first opportunity.

“It strikes me that we may correspond at least once in a year, by one of the members of Congress from your state, as long as we are spared, if we are so minded. It will be your part to make choice of the most proper person, and direct to the care of Mr. Henry Foxall, Georgetown, who will send all letters to me with care and dispatch.

“I have never heard whether you have been ordained, but I suppose you have not been. For several years I was very uneasy about administering the ordinances, and finally did not refrain any longer. Last General conference several of us were very anxious for the ordination of local preachers, but it was so late before we could bring it on, and I was so poorly, that I had left Baltimore before it came to the vote. I have been greatly blamed, as my vote would have carried it. But had we lost it, I was prepared immediately to have recommended the motion by only including such local preachers

as had traveled before the ordinances were among us. This, it is thought, would have passed with little or no opposition. The whole business was laid over till the next conference; and though I shall not be a member of it, yet I hope to have the pleasure of seeing the matter much better done by my brethren than it could be by me. The Lord direct in this, and in all our brethren's consultations, that his will may be done.

“As you say, we are fast hastening to another world. How vast, how awful! Yet how desirable to the soul that is washed in the blood of the Lamb! My dear brother, you are to me almost as one of my old friends that is risen from the dead, and I contemplate great happiness in conversing by letter with you, though four or five hundred miles apart, till we meet in our Father's house above.”

“A letter from Edward Drumgoole I will insert. It is dated in October, 1813:

“**MY DEAR BROTHER GATCH**,—I feel desirous to write you, and to hear from you. From what cause it proceeds I know not, but so it is, I have not received a letter from you in many years. The letters you formerly wrote to me were thankfully received, and I hope when you

have leisure, after the receipt of this, I shall again be favored with a line. There has been no death in my family since I wrote to you last, but there has been some alarming afflictions.

“We are still living in old Brunswick, and nearly in the common way of the country. I often think of Ohio, but can get no farther than a wish to be there.

“It was communicated to me, some time ago, that you had lost sister Gatch. I received it as a fact, and of course sympathized. I am sure your loss was great, and must be long felt, and never forgotten. You have great comfort in reflecting that you long enjoyed a good companion; and although the separation is painful, it will not be long before kindred spirits in Jesus shall again be united in inseparable bonds. I should be glad to hear how she was exercised in her last illness, and to hear that all your children are in the ark of safety.

“My five oldest children are professors, and in society. Our youngest child is sixteen years of age. He is moral, but not a professor yet. May the Lord bring him into the fold! Two of my sons are preachers. The most of our old friends are dead; many of whom, I trust, have made a happy end. I do not think that religion is so flourishing as it was some time ago. We had a good revival two years ago,

and a number of souls were converted; many of them are yet standing professors. I have many fears lest the Methodists, as a people, should become lifeless and formal. Our doctrine and discipline are good, but they are not, I think, so much attended to as in former days. At our great meetings we have crowded congregations, but there is a great failure in attending to class meetings in this part of the world.

“‘I am as yet endeavoring to labor in my Master’s vineyard. I feel comfort at times in speaking, and am often assisted by the Spirit of God, but I fear that I labor in vain, and spend my strength for naught. I have many subjects that I should be glad to converse upon, if it was the will of God that we should be face to face. One thing we may do, and hope it is our practice, to bow our knees before our Father, who sees in secret, and there to implore his choicest favors to descend on us, and upon our offspring, that we may appear before his face with exceeding joy. If we are not permitted to see each other within the walls of an earthly temple, we may join in the worship of the Holy Trinity in the temple not made with hands, which is eternal in the heavens.’”

In the year 1813 the writer saw Mr. Watters

in Virginia at a camp meeting not far from the city of Washington. He was then a venerable-looking man; his head was white, his form erect, his countenance full of benevolence. I think I did not hear him preach; but my attention was particularly directed to him, as I was informed he was one of the first Methodist preachers in America, and had many years labored on the circuit.

Before separating with this venerable man—Watters—it may not be deemed inappropriate to introduce, in his own words, an impressive circumstance. He says: "Since my time has been spent at and about home, I have often been called upon to attend death-beds, and frequently by those who, in the general tenor of their lives, thought but little about preparing for death. Among the many in any part of my life that I have attended, none has appeared to me so remarkable, nor so affecting, as the last illness and death of Mr. Lewis Hipkins, an account of which I, in a few days after his dissolution, wrote to Mr. B., as follows:

"DEAR SIR,—You have, no doubt, before this, been informed of the death of Mr. Hipkins. I was, with many others, a spectator of this most affecting and very instructive scene. It is now something more than twelve years since he married my wife's sister, about which

time our acquaintance began. He was then, and for some time after, a pretty constant attendant at our chapel, and was at times under good impressions. As he got into company and business, his serious impressions wore off, and for several years past, I have too much reason to fear, he had his doubts of all revealed religion, yet not so as openly to avow it. Our friendship as neighbors and connections was entire from our first acquaintance. He took particular pleasure, I always thought, in obliging me.

“Last February, as I was recovering from a dangerous illness, I found my friend’s salvation much on my mind, and in the fullness of my heart wrote to him on the momentous subject without reserve. He immediately sent me the following answer, which will show that his mind was still open to conviction: “I am glad to hear you are so far recovered from your late illness as to be, I trust, out of danger. Your admonitions I take as a friendly pledge of the goodness of your heart toward me, as I have always done, in every instance of the sort, and always am obliged to you for every thing of the kind, as I am well satisfied it flows from a pure principle. I can not so well express to you the language of my heart; but believe me, my dear sir, to be, very affectionately, your assured friend.”

“This letter was dated the 11th of February, 1794. On the third or fourth of June following he was bit by a mad dog, just as he stepped out of the boat at Georgetown ferry. On hearing thereof I felt much alarmed, and went immediately to see him. I found him very serious, and I believe full of thought. He had been with a doctor, and had sent to a Dutch doctor in Pennsylvania, concerning whom he had received several letters from different gentlemen of Georgetown, assuring him of the infallibility of the medicine, which, with the encouragement his friendly physician had given him, kept him in pretty good spirits. On that week I went to see him again, and, to my great dissatisfaction, found him too confident that all was well, and that the sentence of death was postponed; so that, though he had sent so far, and had the medicine so well recommended, he had not taken it, nor could I prevail on him so to do. I entreated him to take the medicine, observing that in all such cases, though we hoped for the best, we ought to prepare for the worst. He said he would take the greatest care of the medicine, and if he perceived the least approach of the complaint he would take it immediately.

“On Wednesday, the twenty-third of July, he was taken with a stretching and a slight

chill, something like the approach of the ague and fever. Thursday he continued much the same. Friday he was worse, and took to his bed; and, although I expect he had his fears, yet it does not appear that he knew his complaint till the forepart of the night, when, being prevailed on to take a sup of tea—for he had taken nothing all day—as he put the cup to his lips, and attempted to sip, he first perceived the hydrophobia on him, and throwing his hand and cup from his mouth, fell back on the bed, and, as soon as he could well speak, told his wife it was all over with him. He suffered violent pain between his shoulders and in his breast, and thought he could not possibly live till morning. Saturday morning, before I was out of my bed, a messenger came for me in all possible haste. When I entered his room, he expressed himself very glad that I was come, and, after he was a little composed, I inquired how he was, and for a few minutes thought that nothing had been the matter but a violent fit of the colic; but it was not long before I knew better; and, O, awful! Shall I ever forget the complaint he poured into my ears? "When I could have taken the medicine from the Dutch doctor I would not; now I fain would take it, but can not! I have no will by me. All my worldly matters are in a very un-

settled state. As to eternity, [he paused,] all left undone!" O, bewitching world, that any thing should keep creatures of a day from first seeking the kingdom of God and his righteousness! My God, what sympathy, fear, and deep concern did my bleeding heart feel in that moment, lest the grieved Spirit and long-neglected Savior now should say, "For none of those that were bidden, (and made light of the invitation,) shall taste of my supper!" After the morning he spent the rest of the day chiefly in settling his worldly business, and it was truly surprising how well, in his mind, he was preserved, and how much he was enabled to go through.

"His kind and affectionate doctor continued by him throughout the night, and did all in his power; but it was too late, his complaint was out of the reach of medicine at this stage, if not from the first. He rested quite easy, and slept the greater part of the night; when we were doing something for him; for he was blistered nearly all over his body, and took much medicine internally; and though it had no effect in saving, or perhaps in prolonging his life, yet I am inclined to think it had a good effect in keeping him longer in his right mind, and lessening his misery, or at least he com-

plained less of acute pain after taking medicine plentifully, till a little before his last.

“Sunday morning he thought himself much better, and gave God thanks, telling me that he had brought him as from the gates of death. I now told him I was going to ride home for a few minutes, which he absolutely opposed, telling me that though I had twenty appointments, I should not attend one of them that day; but after understanding that I would assuredly return in an hour or two, he reluctantly consented. When I returned, about eight o'clock, I found him past taking any more medicine, and in a most distressed and affecting condition indeed. He could not bear any kind of liquid to be near him without being in the utmost panic and torture imaginable; still he knew every one, and would answer any question and converse on any subject. He frequently told me that he hoped that all good people would pray for him. The doctor had been taking off his blister-plasters, and was about to tie the handkerchief that was around his body on his breast; he started, and refused to let him, for fear, he said, he should bite him. The doctor replied, “No, you will not bite me.” He added, “God bless you, I would not for the world; but I am afraid I shall do it involuntarily!” He then caught up a handkerchief and

held it between his mouth and the doctor's hands while he tied the knot. He frequently requested that we would confine him with ropes, lest he should hurt some of us; but I never perceived any thing like an attempt to bite or injure any one.

“As his convulsions became more violent, the doctor directed me to appoint four strong men, and place two on each side the bed, to prevent his rising, to keep the clothes over, and to watch him in all his movements. He started suddenly, as he frequently did, and, calling me by name, told me that — was not to blame that he did not take the Dutch doctor's medicine; “he gave me free leave—no one is to blame but myself.” My heart and eyes were continually so full that I hardly knew how to contain myself in his room, without once in a while withdrawing a few minutes, which, whenever he perceived, he was sure to have me sent for. Being in the next room, he requested Mrs. Hipkins to tell me to come to him. When I approached the bedside, he told me that the doctor's skill and the power of medicine all failed, and that he wanted me to try what prayer would do. The doors were closed, with a few only in the room; the rest—for by this time many had gathered—were in the passage, and in the other room, while we attempted to

prostrate ourselves before the most high God in humble prayer and supplication for the pardon of his sins and the salvation of his soul. I felt no particular answer, but enjoyed a sweet sense of the Divine presence from the time of my first coming to him, with a hope that all would be ordered for the best, and would end well. Some time after he called me to come nigh to him. He said something, but I knew not what, and I made him no answer. He asked if I did not hear him. I told him I did not. He desired that I would come near him, and not be afraid. When I was seated on his bedside, he informed me that he had always had a very great regard for me, and was really sorry that, though we lived so near each other, we had not been more united in serving God; but added, that had been his fault. He then mentioned my last letter to him, with something of the effect it had on him.' Mr. —— has, since his death, told me that it was very perceivable that he was not a little affected with the above-mentioned letter.

"When I first came to him, I observed that when his pains were violent he would call on God to have mercy on him; but I also observed that I never heard him mention the precious name of Jesus till this morning about nine o'clock, and from that hour he owned and called

on the name of Jesus as though he felt the truth of the apostle's assertion, "Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is none other name under heaven given amongst men whereby we must be saved." About three or four o'clock in the afternoon I was standing by his bedside, when he fell into a violent agony of soul and body. He cried out aloud, "Will none of you pray for me?" I felt awfully, and fell on my knees, with many others, around his bedside, and began crying to God in behalf of his salvation. The clouds burst, and the very heavens appeared to open with blessings, and the power of God's Spirit was felt by many present who knew the Lord, and we continued for some time to implore the Divine blessing on our friend. From this moment I felt such a pleasing hope that God would save his soul, that I could cheerfully resign him up to the Divine disposal, believing with an increasing confidence that all would be well.

"When we arose from our knees, we all stood around his bed in a flood of tears, and heard with admiration how his tongue was loosened to pray, and exhort all present. His words were for some time a mixture of prayer, praise, and exhortation. He told us over and over that he was just going to heaven, and begged that we would all follow on and meet him there.

He now said to his wife, "Sukey, pray to God Almighty for my soul, and for your own soul, and for the souls of ____." He declared that God had plucked him as a brand from the burning, and frequently said he was going to heaven. Holding me by the hand, he called me his spiritual father, his god-father, and the good old veteran that had been long in the field. His words came from him with life and feeling, as from his heart; and although he had never made religion his study, yet did he speak more feelingly of Divine truths than many who make it the business of their lives. To an old acquaintance he said, "O Tommy, how often have we spent our time walking about the fields, scheming for the world; but we were not serving God then! Lord, make me thy servant, though I be the least in all thy kingdom!" was his express language, and an expression that, at the time, very much affected me. He often burst out into loud praises, and once in the following words: "Glory to God in the highest! Halleluiah! Amen!" He stretched out his arms and hands, saying that he was dying in perfect love and peace. Above all, I must not omit what was enough to confound any unbeliever, and what several must have heard and observed as well as myself; for with a particular emphasis, and the greatest exertion of his remaining

strength, he cried out, "Christ is the Son of God—the only Son of God." And after his speech was brought down to a whisper, and his senses, I suppose, must have been very imperfect, I heard him distinctly though feebly utter, "Christ! God! Christ! God!" And thus ended the life of Mr. Hipkins."

It is admitted by all, that death by canine madness is the most horrible to which a human being is liable. And yet, in the above instance, it is seen that religion can make such a death happy beyond description. This is a remarkable instance of the triumphs of grace, and the reader will agree that it has not been inappropriately introduced in this sketch.

As an Associate Judge of Clermont county, Mr. Gatch sat twenty-two years on the bench of the court of common pleas, and discharged the important duties of his office in such manner as to secure the confidence of every one. He did not profess to be learned in the law, but he had great practical knowledge of human affairs, and he aimed to arrive at the justice of every case brought before him. His residence being between the Little Miami and Scioto rivers, a tract of country reserved by Congress to satisfy military claims, under the service of Virginia troops in the Revolution, on the continental establishment, and being extensively

acquainted in Virginia, and being a practical surveyor, he was very useful to locaters of land under the Virginia military system. His position on the bench made him acquainted with Virginia military titles, and this knowledge was used to perfect the titles of his friends, and to settle, amicably, controversies when they arose. So much deference was paid to his judgment in these matters, that his advice was followed by those who applied to him.

While he was on the bench two persons—Clark and Ford—were convicted for horse stealing, and sentenced to receive thirty-nine lashes each. This was before our penitentiary system was adopted. The morning after the sentence was executed, Mr. Gatch visited them in prison, where they were to remain some weeks. They showed him their wounds, and he exhorted them to reform their lives. They suggested a loss of reputation as a discouragement to such a course. He advised them to go directly to their former acquaintances, and commence at once a correct course; and when they had, by their lives, given sufficient evidence of reformation, their friends would look over the past. He then prayed with them. They were greatly affected, and hopes were entertained that this interview would not be lost on their future lives.

As an evidence of the respect entertained

for Mr. Gatch on the bench, an extract of a letter from Judge Thompson is introduced. He was the presiding judge of the circuit, of very respectable legal acquirements, and of high moral worth.

In a letter to Mr. Gatch, dated the 16th February, 1816, he says: "I visit you no more as your president, but hope you may be better satisfied, and the people more ably served. I feel a strong attachment to the people of Clermont, and would be willing, even with additional labor, to preside among them; but the arrangement is to the contrary. I shall ever regret being removed from your association, on whom I look as a father, but my sentiments will not be changed, nor my feelings dulled by absence. Write me often as a friend, and believe me your friend and well-wisher. God bless you!"

As a member of the convention of Ohio which formed our first constitution, Mr. Gatch in all his votes was for religious toleration, and on the side of liberty; and particularly against religious bigotry. The following letter from Judge Scott, formerly of the Supreme Court of the state, and who was secretary of the convention, speaks of Mr. Gatch in that body:

"CHILCOOTIE, Feb. 18, 1853.

"Your letter dated Milford, February 5,

1853, in which you notify me of the laudable effort you are making to collect materials from which to prepare a short biographical sketch of your father's life, and requesting me to furnish you with any information respecting him within my knowledge, has been received. My personal acquaintance with your father, the late Rev. Philip Gatch, was very limited, and, consequently, I can furnish you with but little information respecting him that can aid you in your undertaking.

"Your father having been one among the first itinerant Methodist ministers raised up on this continent, I became acquainted with his character very many years before I had the pleasure of seeing him for the first time. He was regarded by our preachers of olden times, who were personally acquainted with him, from whom I received my information respecting him, as a man of inestimable worth. My personal acquaintance with him commenced the first of September, A. D. 1802, when he and the late Mr. James Sargent presented the certificates of their election as delegates from Clermont county to the convention then assembling in this city to form a constitution and state government. Being secretary of that convention, I had an opportunity of witnessing the general deportment and conversations of your

father during the sessions of the convention, till its close; and during that period, whenever their official duties would permit, he and Mr. Sargent spent their evenings in my family circle. I never had the pleasure of hearing him preach, and can, therefore, of my own knowledge, say nothing respecting his talents as a preacher. My impression is, that he did not preach in town during the session of the convention, but that he preached once or twice in the country on the Sabbath. He maintained throughout the session the character of a deeply-pious Christian and Christian minister. No one doubted his sincerity. He was constantly treated with deference and respect, and regarded by the members and officers of the convention, and others, as an honest, pious, plain, sensible, useful member of the convention. His general deportment was grave, yet courteous, affable, and friendly. I do not recollect of his having taken any part in the discussions of the various propositions which were brought before the convention, but the high estimate set upon his character for honesty, integrity, and sound, discriminating judgment, will be readily perceived from these facts: he was a member of the three most important committees raised during the convention, as well as of others. Those committees prepared and reported the

first three articles of the constitution, which related to the legislative, the executive, and the judicial departments of our late state government. His votes were generally approved. He occupied an elevated standing in my own estimation, and I take great pleasure in bearing this testimony of his intrinsic worth.

“Yours, truly, THOMAS SCOTT.”

“In his early life Mr. Gatch had agreed to accompany the Rev. Mr. Rankin to England, and remain there some years. This was on his repeated solicitations. But the Revolutionary war commenced, and that prevented the contemplated visit.

“He was an active and a very influential member of conference. He introduced the measure of trying members of the Church by the society in which they belonged, or by a committee chosen therefrom. Previous to this the membership were at the disposal of the preacher of the circuit. He was prompted to this from witnessing, in his opinion, the indiscretion of preachers in certain cases, by which members suffered wrongfully. He did not desire to introduce this measure himself, but through Mr. Asbury. Mr. Asbury, however, preferred that he should introduce it. The measure did not carry without opposition. Among its warmest

opposers was Doctor Coke, who was then in attendance. This rule has, no doubt, been productive of great good.

"At the same conference Mr. Gatch proposed the measure for the ordination of local preachers to deacons' orders. Against this proposition Doctor Coke was also warmly opposed. The measure was sanctioned by the conference. This was the last conference which Mr. Gatch attended as an active member. This was about 1796."

In his declining years Mr. Gatch, to the extent of his physical ability, was diligent in the cause which he had so long and so successfully espoused. In preaching, and in all the other duties of religion, he was ever active. On the blank page of a letter he indorsed, "I am now in the eightieth year of my natural life, and in the fifty-ninth of my religious pilgrimage. I often take a view of my natural life, and also of my religious exercises, which I feel is of advantage to me. The follies of my youth often give me pain of mind, and grieve my soul. Some evils I abhorred, and others I was delighted with. I heard the Lord, but did not improve the operations of his Spirit, nor the movements of his providence; yet he preserved my life from death, and led me up to manhood, and brought me to hear his Gospel preached,

which proved to me the power of God to salvation. My natural life has been attended with afflictions, but they have been light and short to what I acknowledge I have deserved. I feel myself under the greatest obligations imaginable to love and serve the Lord.

“When a child I was nearly burnt to death; the scars of which still remain. When a small boy at school, the lightning struck a tree near the school-house door, and tore it to pieces, which I saw, and it made an impression on my mind which still remains. The thunders of his power keep the world in awe. This feeling remains with me to the present day. Soon after I was converted I had the measles and bloody flux, which diseases were sanctified to my good. Some time after this I had the small-pox, and suffered much in body and mind; but refreshing showers of grace were extended to my soul. From the sixteenth year of my age to the twenty-eighth, I had every fall of the year more or less of chills and fevers. I had the pleurisy, which went hard with me; but through all these afflictions the Lord has been merciful to me. But I know my dying day is drawing nigh. Prepare me, Lord, to go!

‘O what are all my sufferings here,
If, Lord, thou count me meet,

With that enraptured host to appear,
And worship at thy feet!
Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
Take life or friends away,
But let me find them all again,
In that eternal day!"

The life of this aged patriarch was near its close. The light he imparted was confined to a more narrow circle than in the days of his strength. But it was the same light mellowed by experience, and sustained by a faith which was sure and steadfast. His words were received as coming from the verge of mortality, and all his acts were marked by his friends, to be treasured up in their remembrance. How natural it is to ponder upon the last acts of our dearest friends! They seem to be so nearly connected with the next world, that we can not view them as wholly belonging to earth; and the words uttered are never forgotten. They come to us in the hour of midnight, and are remembered through the whole journey of life.

"On the morning of the 25th of December, he appeared to enjoy his usual health and cheerfulness. He read in family worship a portion of Scripture containing the account of our Lord's nativity. He had always observed and improved the 25th of December in reference to that event. Judge Ranson remarked

that he had heard him preach twenty-nine Christmas sermons in thirty years; being absent one year in the thirty, he did not hear him.

“He took breakfast with the family with as good an appetite as common to him at that time. Soon after breakfast he complained of feeling unwell, and immediately took to his bed, from which he never again arose. It was an attack of influenza, which disease prevailed in the neighborhood. It fastened itself upon the lungs. Up to the morning of the twenty-eighth his sufferings were so extreme that he did not enjoy an hour’s rest. On Sunday morning he appeared to be somewhat relieved from pain, and inclined to sleep. Hope was entertained that the disease was giving way; but this hope was momentary. It was soon manifest that his feeble frame was yielding to the cold touch of death.

“He appeared sensible of his situation, but said but little. A few hours before his dissolution, he remarked, four of his children standing by his bed, that on the morning before he was taken he had an unusual flow of Divine feelings, such as he had rarely experienced; but that during his affliction his pain had been so great that he could hardly compose his mind while he could send a wish to a throne of grace;

but that we must all pray for him, as he had continually prayed for us. When asked, however, he expressed an unshaken confidence in God. As the day advanced he gradually sunk, till, about seven o'clock in the evening, he fell asleep in the arms of Jesus, without a struggle or a groan. In this peaceful manner, without any agitation of body or mind, did the sanctified spirit of this aged Christian leave its earthly abode for the bosom of its God.

"On the thirtieth a funeral sermon was preached by the Rev. John Collins, an early acquaintance of his in the west, and one who had fought side by side with him in the cause of truth, from 2 Timothy iv, 6-8, which reads, 'For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.'

"After the sermon his remains were followed by a large procession of relatives and friends to the burying-ground on his farm, where he was laid by the side of his companion, to await the call of the archangel. On that call he will meet many thousands at the bar of God, who

were favored with his administrations on earth; he to receive according to the improvement of his talent—they according to the improvement of their privileges."

Will the reader take his stand-point at this period in the history of this venerable man; look at his boyhood, devoted to youthful indiscretions and follies; his early convictions and mental struggles, his temptations and sorrows, the many difficulties he encountered, his marked conversion, the heavy cross he took up, the conviction of a want of knowledge and ability to preach the Gospel, the persecution which thickened upon him, covered with tar, beaten with clubs, his life threatened, his wonderful perseverance and steadfastness, his success and faithfulness, the serenity of his latter years, the universal respect in which he was held, his peaceful death; and then ask himself the question, whether he would not prefer such a life, with all its trials and persecutions, followed by the death he died, than to be numbered with the great and powerful of the earth, and die as they usually die.

The inheritance of this man was not secured by a life of indulgence, by the enjoyment of worldly honors or worldly greatness, but by a life of self-denial, of labor, in season and out of season, to benefit his fellow-creatures; a life

devoted to all the duties of religion. In such a life there is safety, true enjoyment, and endless happiness in the life to come. The venerable Gatch has mapped out this way. He has so plainly marked it that no one can mistake it. Its end is peace, as all shall find who walk in it.

George, the youngest son of Mr. Gatch, says: "When Mr. Kobler, the pioneer of Methodism in the Miami country, visited me in 1841, he, on taking my hand, held it for some time in silence, looking me in the face with a most impressive expression of countenance, which produced in me a sensation that I shall not attempt to describe. At length, in the most emphatic manner, he said, 'Your father was a great man in his day. He fought many hard battles for the Church. May you be a worthy son of so worthy a father!'

"He visited the graves of my parents, took off his hat, and stood some minutes as if absorbed in deep thought; then fell upon his knees for some time, arose bathed in tears, walked out of the graveyard in silence, and then remarked to me, 'I remember the appearance of your parents as well as if I had seen them but yesterday. I can only contemplate them in the prime of life.' He remarked to a friend who met him after he had come out of

the graveyard, that he had just been paying a funeral service to the memory of his friends."

What living man is there who would not prefer a tribute so impressive and affectionate, to all the figures of rhetoric employed in a fulsome eulogy! The one is generally formal, composed with a view more to display the ability of the writer than the merits of the deceased; the other is the offering of the heart, uplifted to heaven in thankfulness for the good done by the departed.

I will here indulge in a short sketch of Mr. Gatch, referring to my first acquaintance with him in 1808. Having been admitted to the bar in that year, and Clermont being one of the counties in which I intended to practice my profession, I attended the court at Williamsburg, which was then the seat of justice for the county. The Hon. Francis Dunlavy was President Judge of the circuit, and presided; his Associate Judges in Clermont were Judge Gatch, Judge Ranson, and Judge Wood. At that time Jacob Burnet, and several other gentlemen of the profession who resided in Cincinnati, attended the court, occasionally, at Williamsburg. Thomas Morris was then a leading lawyer in the county. He was afterward frequently elected to the Legislature, then to the Supreme bench of the state, and eventually to

the senate of the United States. Afterward, Doctor Rogers and Mr. Foot were active lawyers in the county; and Martin Marshal, of Augusta, Kentucky, practiced in the county, and also Mr. Campbell, of Adams county, who afterward served in Congress, and a few years before his death was appointed District Judge of the United States for the state of Ohio. Joshua Callett, who was afterward a Judge of the Supreme Court of Ohio, also practiced in the county.

The early incidents of a professional life are generally more deeply impressed upon the mind than subsequent occurrences. Every court was fruitful of interesting facts, which caused them to be remembered, and to be frequently referred to as anecdotes connected with the practice. Judge Gatch stood at the head of the three Associate Judges for Clermont county. He was more generally known than any of them, possessed more general knowledge, had served in the convention which adopted the constitution of the state, and had a weight of character which justly entitled him to a pre-eminence over the other county Judges. These Judges were selected from the respectable and intelligent men of the county, and were elected by the Legislature; but it was not deemed an indispensable requisite that they should have studied

law. They were, generally, men of sound, practical sense, and were capable of coming to a correct decision of a matter discussed before them. They rarely, however, overruled the opinion of the President Judge on a point of mere law.

At the time spoken of, Judge Gatch was somewhat advanced in life, and had a venerable appearance. His opinions were always distinguished by good sense, and favorable to the right of the case. And not unfrequently he evinced an independence which showed that in all matters not merely technical, he deliberated for himself, and carried out his own convictions.

The Judge was not tall, but his form was stout, and capable of great physical effort; and such were, I believe, the qualities of his mind. His mind in its action was deliberate, and his words and conclusions were wiser and better than if his nature had been impulsive. No one, it is believed, could ever have doubted his uprightness in the discharge of his judicial duties. His responsibility was felt, and he spared no pains or effort to understand the justice of the case. Such was the confidence felt in his honesty, that parties were ready to think themselves in the wrong when father Gatch gave judgment against them.

I recollect, on one occasion, being engaged in the defense of a criminal, in the absence of the President Judge, Judge Gatch presiding. I endeavored to reach the feelings of the jury, and having brought almost all of them to tears, my adversary appealed to the Court to check my course of remark, as calculated to mislead the jury; but Judge Gatch rebuked my adversary, and in handsome terms commended my remarks. This was very encouraging to a young man in the commencement of his profession, and I always afterward felt grateful to the Judge.

I am under the impression that Judge Gatch served a little more than three terms of seven years each on the bench, though I do not speak positively on the subject. But whether he served three terms or not, I can say with more confidence that his retirement from the bench was voluntary, and against the wishes of his friends.

During the terms of the court, Judge Gatch occasionally preached. The first time I heard him was in the evening, by candlelight, in the court-house, and I was struck with the simplicity of his manner. He talked to the people as a patriarch would speak to his children. His language was so plain that a child could understand him; and his attitude, leaning toward

them with uplifted hands, was so engaging as to rivet the attention of all who heard him. I thought at the time it was more like apostolic preaching than I had ever before witnessed. It was the beloved John, saying to his hearers, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

I should think that Judge Gatch, in his long and successful ministerial labors, was more indebted to a kindness of manner, and simplicity and clearness of expression, than to any peculiar excitement of his nature. His aim was to speak of religion in all its loveliness, and recommend it for its happifying effects on individuals and on society, rather than in the language of poetry to paint its glories. His mind was less imaginative than solid; his powers of reasoning less specious than sound. What he saw clearly he could express well, his desire being to benefit his hearers and discharge his duty faithfully. In public and in private, on the bench and in the pulpit, the whole life of Judge Gatch was a beautiful commentary upon the religion he professed.

It is profitable to contemplate the course of such a man. There were no startling facts in his history; but there was a meekness, a forbearance, a Christian propriety, in all that he said and did, which could not fail to impress

all who considered his character, that it was a happy medium which, upon the whole, was the safest for an individual, and, perhaps, the best for society.

In manner and matter, Mr. Gatch was one of a class of preachers who laid the foundation of Methodism in America. They were not learned in their own estimation, nor in the estimation of the world. They were educated in the school of Christ, but beyond this their qualifications did not surpass those of the fishermen and publicans, who first preached the Gospel in Judea. They wore the Christian armor, and bore meekly the Christian spirit. They were despised and condemned for their presumption and ignorance. Perhaps not one of them could form a syllogism, nor argue within the most approved rules of logicians. In short, they were not of the world. The world was against them, aided by all the powers of darkness. But they went forth, not in their own strength, but in the strength of Him who chooses the weak things of this world to confound the mighty. They went forth, and their cry was heard through the land. A strange doctrine fell upon the ears of the people. A knowledge of sins forgiven was proclaimed as essential to salvation, and damnation was denounced *against the finally impenitent*. This fell harshly

upon the ears of the refined and fashionable world. It was not in accordance with the set phrases and well-turned periods of the pulpit orators of the day.

Curiosity brought out many to hear what these enthusiasts might say. Some who thus came, returned not as they came. There was an earnestness of manner in the preacher which was new to them. He described the joys of religion with an unction which they had never before witnessed. They saw he was sincere. He spoke of his own happiness, while tears like rain drops fell from his eyes. What could this mean? was the inquiry, mental or vocal, with many.

Force was used to put down this fanaticism, as dangerous to the people. But stripes and ignominy had no terrors for the preachers of that day. They carried their lives in their hands. They went forth not knowing what should befall them, except that persecution and stripes awaited them. Persecution increased their zeal, and caused the doctrines they preached to be more generally known and understood. Converts to the new doctrine were made daily, and they were endued with the same spirit. Fulminations from the pulpit against this enthusiasm were uttered in vain. *All the arts of logic were exhausted to keep*

the people from the contagion, without effect. The interest excited became deeper and wider. The sect every-where spoken against, every-where increased. Having few churches, the Gospel was preached in the open air, and in barns, and wherever the people would gather themselves together. The preachers, sensible of their own deficiencies, had no confidence in their own strength. They did not aim to preach great sermons, but sermons that would reach the heart, and cause it to overflow.

Such preaching as this has become somewhat unfashionable. We are becoming a little too refined, and too learned for such exhibitions. Preaching is now sometimes more to the head than the heart. What we gain in learning we lose in power. Some preachers are opposed to what they call story-telling, in their sermons. This was practiced in the early age of Methodism, and it was admirably suited to those times. And if more practiced, it would be found to be just as well suited to the present times.

It is a singular fact that more than one half of the Scriptures are conveyed to us in historical language, or in the nature of such language. Look at the parables of our Savior. They related incidents of a marked character, or illus-

trated a great principle by the representation of facts true to nature. These command the attention, and deeply impress the memory. The human mind is so formed as to be more influenced by well-authenticated facts, than by any course of reasoning. The triumphs of grace may be portrayed in the most beautiful and appropriate language, but the people are not affected as they would be by the relation of a powerful conversion, or a triumphant death. Such instances bring before the mind and the heart of the hearer the realities spoken of; the scene transpires in his full view, and he feels as though he were a witness of it.

Who can read the history of Joseph and his brethren without tears? But tears could rarely be excited by treating, however eloquently, of affection between brethren. The speaker would necessarily generalize the subject, and the hearer would not apply it to himself. But when the characters are grouped before him, he enters into the sympathies of each, and applies the case to his own heart. Does not the experience of the reader establish this truth? If it does, he has the explanation of successful preaching. The world can only be affected and overcome in this manner.

Will Methodist preachers forget their college lessons, and study human nature, by learning the method of the pioneers of Methodism? This method, pursued by devoted lives and sanctified hearts, will subdue the world.



APPENDIX.

THE following letter was omitted in the body of the sketch; but being important, it is here inserted:

MR. PHILIP B. SWING—DEAR SIR,—Yours of the 30th ult. came to hand in due time, and I now sit down to reply. You impose a task upon me that would have been quite easy even ten years ago; but is not so now; for my mental as well as physical powers are both much decayed; but the mention of an old pioneer in the west rouses me, and I must address myself to the task, and show at least a willingness to contribute a mite toward a biographical sketch of the venerable and highly-esteemed Philip Gatch. I do this the more cheerfully as I have been so long and intimately acquainted with one of his brothers—Benny—and three of his sisters. He was born in Baltimore county, Maryland, not more than ten miles from where I am writing. His father and family were among the very first fruits of Methodism in this same county; and here truly the seed fell in good ground; for they gave a happy tone to that form of Christianity in two different

neighborhoods, and were the main stay of two societies, and furnished comfortable homes for the early preachers, where they were always welcome. This old stock are now all gone, but Methodism still lives in their descendants, and the same houses—or rather better ones—are still open to the preachers and God's people.

I had frequently heard of Philip Gatch, and the persecution he endured in the time of the Revolutionary war, for conscience' sake, while engaged in his Master's work; but never saw him till I found him on the rich banks of the Little Miami. We met quite in primitive Methodist preacher's style, with a cordial shake by the hand, or, perhaps, a hearty embrace. I soon found way to his house, where I found a holy family—every thing conducted on Christian principles, quiet, peaceful, and harmonious. Although brother Gatch had not been long in the territory, he had already gained the respect and confidence of all who knew him. In his intercourse and dealings with men he was unassuming, honest, and above-board; so that he stood high as a citizen and a Christian in community. As to his literary attainments I know nothing; but should suppose that they were nothing more than could be obtained in a common English county school; and such schools were not, in his early day, what they are now. As a public speaker, his language was good, plain, unadorned with flowers, and every word had its meaning. In conversation, he was to

me very instructive and entertaining when he could be drawn out. I found him a faithful and true friend, one that could be relied on. He was blessed with a strong common-sense mind. If I understood my old friend he did not hastily make up his mind on any subject, or course to be pursued in any matter; but when his mind was once made up, he was not easily shaken or turned out of his course. I viewed him as a man of a strong, discriminating, and decided mind. As a preacher I esteemed him an excellent specimen, or rather relic of a primitive Methodist preacher of American growth. He always selected his text suitable for the occasion, and arranged his subject by premeditation, as did all the preachers in early days, when they possibly had opportunity. They seldom or never, however, refused to preach Christ crucified to a congregation, though they had but a moment's warning; and sometimes, on such occasions, they were assisted from on high, and the efforts were extraordinary.

I heard brother Gatch preach but a few times, and then he was a plain, evangelical, and powerful preacher. He seemed to forget himself, and his whole reliance for success appeared to be upon Divine influence; and he was a close home preacher, and called things by their proper names, and spared neither sin nor the sinner. He preached extensively and successfully, and did much toward establishing and extending Methodism in that country, and giving it a proper tone. We all looked up to

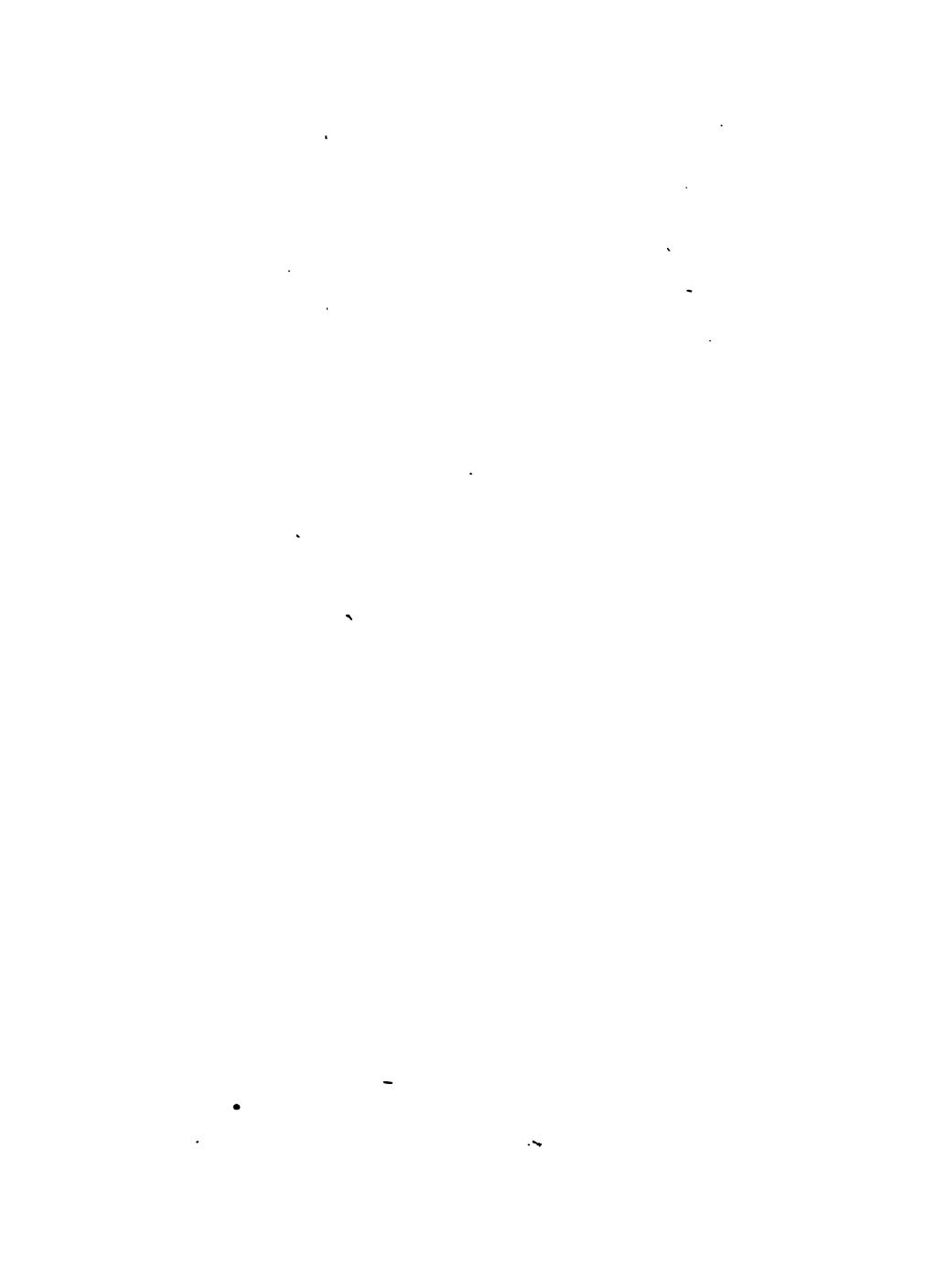
him as a patriarch, a counselor, and waymark. In a word, he was a prince in our Zion. I was the friend of Philip Gatch, and trust that I am the friend of his numerous descendants.

HENRY SMITH.

Pilgrim's Rest, September 13, 1851.

THE END.









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